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Issues in Ancient Philosophy

THE *HIEROGLYPHICS* OF HORAPOLLO NILOUS

HIEROGLYPHIC SEMANTICS IN LATE ANTIQUITY

Mark Wildish

ROUTLEDGE



The *Hieroglyphics* of Horapollo Nilous

The main aim of this book is to reconstruct a philosophical context for the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollo, a late 5th century Greek study of hieroglyphic writing. In addition to reviewing and drawing on earlier approaches it explores the range of signs and meanings for which Horapollo is interested in giving explanations, whether there are characteristic types of explanations given, what conception of language in general and of hieroglyphic Egyptian in particular the explanations of the meanings of the glyphs presuppose, and what explicit indications there are of having been informed or influenced by philosophical theories of meaning, signs, and interpretation.

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Hieroglyphic Semantics in Late Antiquity

Mark Wildish

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Preface

In line with the stated aims of the series the theme of this book unquestionably lies ‘outside the central “canon”’. In fact, so far outside the canon does it lie, few philosophically inclined readers of ancient and classical materials will have so much as heard of it. This unfamiliarity perhaps cuts both ways. On the one hand, the task of making Horapollo’s *Hieroglyphica* of philosophical interest to such readers is thereby compounded and complicated. On the other, the same unfamiliarity may lighten the burden of expectation in favour of a broader conception of philosophical interest and thus a broader audience to address.

The task, as it turned out, entailed the collation and assimilation of several diverse layers of accumulated thought; the result, therefore, is something of a chimaera, a platypus, a calendar-beast with philological head, philosophical torso, and a bibliographical tail. This does not seem to me to be out of keeping with the nature of the book that is its topic, however. Quite the opposite, in fact, as I hope will become apparent. There is a risk of sorts, I suppose, associated with endeavouring to provide a text with a history so long established within another genre, field, and tradition with a more or less new context in which to read it – all the more so if that new context is the philosophy of late antiquity. That said, an understanding decidedly at odds with widely accepted – presumably for good reason – readings of this or that canonical work can be immensely revealing in the face of an imposing orthodoxy. To take just one familiar example, a reminder that the arguments for the immortality of the soul in the *Phaedo* might not be intended to be persuasive, not even to Simmias or Cebes, who might otherwise be expected to find them so, made good dialectical sense in the 19th century. That it did seems to me to be a point still worth making. But, under the influence of what, for want of a better word, I shall call the ‘analytic’ mood prominently favoured these days in philosophy, ancient and modern, the idea that they might have been intended as anything but rationally conclusive (even if unsuccessful in that), seems derisory.

The history of philosophical thought, however, is not unresponsive (let alone wholly immune) to the broader culture in which it is embedded. More than that, it has frequently concerned itself less with tracing and justifying the contours of the intellectual environment in which it is conducted than with extending them. Nonetheless, as rooted in wider intellectual currents as at least

some areas of philosophy might be, in the inclination to introduce, for example, bibliographical, art historical, or perhaps especially philological culture into a claim on the philosophical interests of a reader of Horapollo the scope for over-interpretation is a non-negligible concern. Translation, after all, is not the only way to traduce an author.

With that in mind the following is presented as just such a venture in extending the contours of work not only on the hieroglyphic tradition and Horapollo's unique place within it, but also on the contribution he makes in light of the philosophical presuppositions I take to inform the *Hieroglyphica* and its parallels.

Of the three English-language versions available (for which see the list of *Text Editions* in the *Bibliography* at the back of the volume), by far the most pleasing is Cory's.¹ In providing English versions of Horapollo's Greek, I have to varying degrees revised or freely adapted from Cory's translation, consistently in cases where I give 'signifying' for 'symbolizing' in line with the argument presented in this book. Where existing translations have been used in the case of authors other than Horapollo, this is marked in the endnotes.

Mark Wildish

May 2017

Note

- 1 Cory, A. T., *The Hieroglyphics of Horapollo Nilous* (London: William Pickering, 1839).

Introduction

In the course of the depiction of more than a score of mammals, in part or in whole, in various postures, positions, attitudes, almost as many birds, a dozen meteorological phenomena, a handful of insects, reptiles, an arachnid, three species of flora, an assortment of artefacts and attributes, only two colours embellish the natural world of the *Hieroglyphica*: black and gold. A black dove to signify a woman who remains a widow till her death, the black ink of a cuttlefish to signify the (futile) attempt of a man eager to escape evil for good, and the golden diadems in the figures of basilisks, signifying eternity and bestowed upon the gods. The dog-star flashes briefly, however, both brightly and less so, as do torches lit to ward off lions, and there are serpents with variegated scales too. There are elephants' trunks to discern obstacles, scentless panthers, and human noses affected by the exhalation of dissected dogs. Bulls' ears to hear from a great distance, she-goats that hear through their nostrils, elephants that flee the snorting of hogs, weasels that sound alarm at the approach of serpents, and thunder can be found. There is even a crocodile motionless at the touch of an ibis wing.

The sensory nature of both the hieroglyphs on display and the range of the phenomena they frequently allude to is as various as it is evident. Necessarily so, it will transpire, in order the better to draw the attention of its reader to the contrast with what one understands by means of them. If hieroglyphs meant only what they depicted – or at any rate some closely related phenomenon – or if the meaning were simply homonymous with the Egyptian word for the item they describe, we would be firmly within the realm of historical philology. But this is not the purpose of Horapollo's observations, or the focus of his preoccupations. His focus is rather on hieroglyphs as sensible objects and his purpose is to reveal the intelligible objects they signify.

Readers of one of the modern editions of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* quickly learn three things. First, its ancient author (and to a lesser extent, his editor) was in possession of at least partially reliable information about the meaning of certain Egyptian hieroglyphs. Second, in terms of its sources the text owes as much to the Greek natural history tradition as to the Egyptian scribal tradition. Third, the volume enjoyed a vogue in 16th and 17th century Europe as an important example of Renaissance humanist emblem literature. As a result the audience

2 Introduction

for Horapollo is traditionally composed of an equal mix of Egyptologists, classicists, art historians, historians of ideas, and bibliophilic collectors. Commentaries, therefore, have tended to take a corresponding array of approaches.

Attempts to rehabilitate the *Hieroglyphica* of Horapollo¹ as a serious object of study have accordingly produced detailed and valuable contributions to late or post-Hellenistic, early Egyptological, and Renaissance studies alike. One popular option has been to offer a philological study. The primary interest of philological criticism had been to emphasize the apparent shortcomings of the classical hieroglyphic tradition in light of the success of the modern decipherment endeavour. In recent cases, however, retrospective attempts at the rehabilitation of the *Hieroglyphica* as a philologically valid work of ancient lexicography along Egyptological lines have reached an equilibrium in conceding at least partial philological authority to the work. As a result the text has generally been recognized as composite, comprising a core of at least partially informed collated observations on genuinely Egyptian material, particularly in the first book, and a later expansion of that material originating with its named editor, Philip, without specific knowledge of Egyptian hieroglyphs.

Another main class of existing commentaries is that in which the explanations in the *Hieroglyphica* are represented as an extended invention on an Egyptian theme, in the tradition of the Greek reception of Egyptian wisdom, drawn from a backdrop of Hellenistic antiquarianism, employing the format of an interpretative treatise that conceals its true origins as an eclectic compendium of diverse commonplaces and antiquarian lore. Though this judgement is typically founded on the assumption that the Hellenizing sequences, constituting a kind of emblematic catalogue of traits and occupations emphasizing key moral, social, and humanist themes, stand in need of correction in the direction of Egyptology, there has also recently been an attempt to develop an understanding of the text as a Greek essay in semiology, based partly on Egyptian glyphs, partly on Hellenizing lore, offering hermeneutic strategies for the reception of an unknown written language.²

Reviewing and drawing on these earlier approaches, the main aim of this book is to make Horapollo's text a late 5th century Greek study of hieroglyphic writing of interest to historians of Greek philosophy by situating it within late 5th century Neoplatonism. At first glance this idea is both less quaint and more focussed than the earlier approaches. There are *prima facie*, moreover, three compelling reasons for thinking it not merely a possible line of inquiry, but also even plausible.

As such, the primary aim of this book is the reconstruction of a development in the history of the philosophy of language, namely an understanding of hieroglyphic Egyptian as a language uniquely adapted to the purposes and concerns of late Platonist metaphysics.

I describe the development as taking place in the philosophy of language because it identifies language – in this case, a particular language – as a topic of specific interest for the discipline of philosophy. My interest in that development concerns the philosophical status of that development, its methods, and

its conclusions, and is therefore an essay in the history of philosophy of language. Of course, the reconstruction is to a large extent concerned with what are otherwise essentially historical aspects of the literature of late antiquity on the subject of hieroglyphic Egyptian. However, that concern extends only so far as the historical aspect supports a specifically philosophical interest – and this is the basis of the secondary aim of the following, namely, an assessment of the presuppositions of the development as reconstructed. In this respect, on one hand the project has more in common with Frede's characterization of an earlier 'doxographical tradition' in the history of philosophy, than the later developmental tradition he distinguishes from it.³ On the other hand, it no more presupposes 'a basic set of philosophical questions' than it is written 'from a particular philosophical position' to which the history of philosophy has led us. Far less does it endorse the idea that 'philosophical understanding is *essentially* historical'.⁴ The project is philosophical, rather, not only because the *Hieroglyphica* is a product of an indisputably philosophical tradition and, therefore, might itself be thought to do philosophical work, but also because the judgement I form is a judgement on such philosophical reasons as are available for thinking so. In principle, then, the 'basic set of philosophical questions' addressed 'from a particular philosophical position' is that of the late Platonists themselves.

The *Hieroglyphica* is not, however, an explicitly Platonic text. If it were, there would be no reason to mount a case for the value of interpreting it as such. Most of its immediate sources belong either to the Aristotelian natural history tradition, or the Stoic tradition of hieroglyphic exegesis stemming from Chaeremon. This dual provenance is, however, already suggestive, given the scholastic inclinations I referred to earlier. It is possible, if not likely, that indications of Platonic affiliation can be found in the reception of the hieroglyphic tradition in Plotinus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus, but there are also hints that Horapollon may have encountered and incorporated Proclan cosmological ideas, perhaps through his uncle and father-in-law, Heraiscus.

The *Hieroglyphica* has not typically commended itself to book-length discursive investigation, not least, of course, because it is not itself discursive. Translations and commentaries are more usual than sustained argumentative endeavours. That is to be explained, I think, by the difference between, on the one hand, the question of what it was Horapollon took himself to be doing in compiling the *Hieroglyphica* and, on the other, the question of what it is readers of the *Hieroglyphica* take themselves to be doing. The issue of method has scarcely been raised in addressing the relationship between the two. It is hardly a criticism of the translations and commentaries that their authors adopt a philological focus, assessing the text according to its Egyptological credentials or classical inheritance, but, as mentioned earlier, the tradition of the reception of the *Hieroglyphica* also includes art history and humanist didactic literature. Even in antiquity the hieroglyphic tradition had incorporated, in addition to linguistic signs, the interpretation of natural and divine signs too.

My method, then, insofar as this extends beyond purely procedural features (selecting and collating sources, translating texts, etc.), involves what might be described as a form of connective analysis. There is, on this assumption, a network of morphological commonalties to the multiple traditions of the sources and reception of the *Hieroglyphica*, of which it is itself a particular specimen, standing as it were in a Linnaean relationship with its cousins in the aforementioned traditions. Hieroglyphic signs in Horapollo's text are morphologically related to natural signs in the nature of the *realia* they depict, and both are further related to extra-textual features exemplified by the texts populating parallel traditions with which the *Hieroglyphica* shares common sources and purposes and with which it therefore exhibits co-extensive morphology.

To shed light on its place in an obscure tradition it will not be sufficient, however, to observe, identify, and describe multiple lines of source exploitation and textual reception, though the process is methodologically suggestive. These lines of reception, for instance, need not be genealogically determined. They generate their own patterns of morphological resemblance, both amongst themselves and in relation to their source materials, including both the *Hieroglyphica* itself and its subject-matter. On the understanding that whatever the mechanism of transmission between a text and its reception the one is in fact transmitted via the other, the notion of taking these patterns of resemblance as establishing reliable means for determining the ground and function of an originating text (or even particular sequences within it) is at any rate less liable to charges of citing material out of context, or with excessive license. So, for example, Horapollo structurally privileges the explanation of the meaning of a glyph. This feature is, in fact, what distinguishes it from the word-lists and glossographies with which it otherwise has much in common. Moreover, explanation of the meaning of a sign entails – no matter how implicitly – commitments to particular conceptions as to what it is for something to constitute an explanation of the meaning of a sign. Attempts can be found in thematically parallel sources to formulate not only precisely this kind of explicit conception, but also equally explicit readings of specifically 'Egyptian' symbols on the basis of them. The facts concerning connections through common features of morphology cannot be irrelevant to understanding Horapollo, even if the one cannot be directly linked with the other on purely causal historical grounds.

In other words, the presuppositions and purposes of the traditions into which the *Hieroglyphica* was received reflect real possibilities presented by the original text, just as the presuppositions and purposes of the traditions into which the source material of the *Hieroglyphica* figures independently of the text mirror equally real possibilities in the source material that appears within the text.

Another related element of method is not to attempt to determine in advance what the conception of meaning or signification at work in the *Hieroglyphica* is, or ought to be. The fact that Egyptological philology on the whole proceeds on the basis of the principles of the decipherment endeavour is not presumed to be determinative for Horapollo as a standard of correctness. In other words, whether the significance of a glyph is explained in terms of schematic or formal

characteristics of the glyph, inferential relations between such formal features and the items they depict, or the symbolic substitution of a glyph signifying a feature or property exhibited by the item it depicts, it is the explanation that determines what it is an explanation of, and not the reverse. The focus of what follows is not whether Horapollo broached a freestanding task subject to independent criteria of success, but what it is that the explanations he gives actually explain.

I begin with an introductory chapter describing the background and hieroglyphic inheritance of Horapollo and the text of the *Hieroglyphica*. The most important source of biographical information on its author is Damascius' *Vita Isidori*. In it are charted the philosophical careers of the late 5th and early 6th century Neoplatonists in Athens, Alexandria, Aphrodisias, and Apamea – the *diadochi* of the *aurea catena* comprising the municipal chair-holders in Alexandria and the private teachers of other Platonic institutions and their circle.⁵ According to Damascius' account, an elder Horapollo had two sons, Asclepiades and Heraiscus, under both of whom Isidore studied. Flavius Horapollo of Menouthis (fl. 474 A.D. – 491 A.D.), a.k.a. 'Psychapollo' was the son of Asclepiades and both the nephew and son-in-law of Heraiscus, with whom he was arrested and tortured under Zeno's persecution of the pagans. The younger Horapollo is the presumed author of the *Hieroglyphica*.

The text itself consists of the explanations of two hundred and thirty-nine distinct meanings of one hundred and eighty-six unique 'Egyptian' hieroglyphs in a series of one hundred and eighty-nine sections in two books. One principal focus of investigation, therefore, is the range of meanings for which Horapollo is interested in giving explanations, whether there are characteristic types of explanations given, what conception of language in general, and of hieroglyphic Egyptian in particular, the explanations of the meanings of the glyphs presuppose, and what the explicit indications of having been informed or influenced by philosophical theories of meaning, signs, interpretation, and explanation are.

The three main lines of ancient tradition and reception on which the discussion is subsequently focussed are the Egyptian, Graeco-Roman, and Graeco-Coptic. Each of these forms the background against which thematically related Platonic material is introduced in order to provide theoretical context in which to re-read the *Hieroglyphica* on these same themes. I identify those themes as linguistic, natural, and divine. This serves two purposes. First, the three ancient lines of tradition have historically lent themselves to philological, natural scientific, and theological inquiry respectively. Second, and crucially for the overall argument, under momentum provided by Iamblichus, these three disciplines map explicitly and methodologically onto a three-layer Neoplatonic curriculum of logic (*λογική*), natural science (*φυσιολογία*), and metaphysics (*θεολογία*). This arrangement will also allow for a certain degree of anticipation in the earlier chapters of later material.

Chapter 2 begins by examining the philological criticism which has focussed on the tradition's apparent congruence or otherwise with the success of the

decipherment endeavour. The primary interest of the decipherment endeavour was the reconstruction of the language of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. As a result of that endeavour a distinction was drawn between sound-signs and sense-signs into which hieroglyphic texts are typically analyzed. The introduction of this distinction is the product of an independent interest in the phonology and semantics of hieroglyphic Egyptian. It does not inform a purely orthographic analysis of sign-groups which are lexically specific and must be learnt as such. It is in any case impossible systematically to maintain the distinction without qualification and equivocation.

In addition to reflection on contemporary theoretical models of hieroglyphic Egyptian, the chapter further addresses two groups of Graeco-Roman evidence. First, linguistic artefacts, like the Rosetta stone, the Flaminian obelisk of Augustus, the obelisk of Constantius in the Circus Maximus, the Isiac table, and the classical tradition of *Αἰγυπτιακά* and histories of Egypt. Second, the lexicographical bilingual glossaries, translations, interpretations (*ἐρμηνεῖαι*, *ἐρμηνεύματα*, etc.), and the broader philological and exegetical tradition. This represents the other of the two major traditions within which Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* has historically been situated.

The chapter concludes by introducing a new, that is, non-traditional perspective into frame. By examining aspects of semantic theory which may be thought to account for how and what hieroglyphic signs signify as well as the relationship between what is signified and both the natural phenomena they depict and the causes of them, the enquiry can draw on resources in the field of philosophical semantics.

In Chapter 3 I address a second historically conspicuous approach to the text according to which the *Hieroglyphica* exhibits features in common with both the Graeco-Roman lexicographical tradition and late Imperial or early mediaeval encyclopaedias and natural history miscellanies. These latter are, on the one hand, materially related to the glossaries, but on the other hand can also be generically assigned to an exegetical tradition encompassing, for example, the 5th–6th century encyclopaedias of Martianus Capella and Cassiodor, or the *Etymologiae sive Origines* of Isidore of Seville. This is important because the two descriptive terms the text applies to itself, *ἐρμηνεία* and *ἐξήγησις*, specifically refer to genres of interpretative and exegetical endeavour. Since the range of hieroglyphic signs corresponds with an identical range of *realia* depicted by them – mammals, insects, birds, fish, celestial and meteorological phenomena, etc. – the latter offers an ideal methodological resource upon which to draw in explanation of the glyphs. We have at least partial or occasional precedents in the Greek tradition for the kind of discussion of natural phenomena that informs the *Hieroglyphica* (e.g. Aristotle, Philo, Aelian, Pliny, Artemidorus, Basil, Ambrose, the *Physiognomica*, and the *Physiologus*). Furthermore, one of our Coptic sources, Shenoute, was also familiar with the 3rd century Egyptian zoological and allegorical text under the title *Physiologus*. This tradition of the Greek natural histories led to a distinctively Renaissance *genre* of archetypal iconic language. Upon the issue of a series of printed

editions of the text in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, it was to the tradition of *emblematics* as exemplified in Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica* and Alciato's *Emblemata* that the interpretative methodology of the *Hieroglyphica* thereafter made its most extensive contribution. I argue, therefore, that the *Hieroglyphica* represents not a movement towards the hieroglyphic *system* of Champollion, but towards the later hieroglyphic *techniques* of Colonna, Bellini, and Dürer. These techniques involve the juxtaposition of the observation of natural phenomena, recorded in the form of glyphic depictions, such that various non-referential significative possibilities can be ascribed to the latter on the basis of corresponding causal interrelations amongst the former. As a consequence, in the *Hieroglyphica* these techniques are productive not in the development of the methodologies proper to dictionaries and encyclopaedias (i.e. definition, translation, or classification), but in semiotically determined *genres* of moral and allegorical didacticism.

In Chapter 4 the aim is two-fold. First, in terms of both topic and historical context (the Greek reception of Egyptian wisdom and 4th–5th century pagan-Christian relations), the *Hieroglyphica* can be situated within the broader philosophical project in which the Neoplatonic commentators were engaged. Second, though the Greek authors do recognize a range of lexicographical features distinctive of hieroglyphic Egyptian, they are primarily interested in contrasting hieroglyphic and Greek *semantics* through observations on the former's use of (among others) a 'pictographic', and, therefore, it was presumed, non-discursive script.

The remainder of the chapter goes on to address the question of the sense in which the Neoplatonic interpretation of hieroglyphs either preserves or fails to preserve the intellectual content of the hieroglyph it explains. By virtue of aligning the three structural and exegetical components (namely the glyphs, their meanings, and the *realia* they depict) and the categorical hierarchies into which they are organized, a methodological expedient emerges whereby the interpreter is enabled to reason from both natural phenomena and their conceptual significance upwards, analytically to the secondary and primary causes of those phenomena. This is illustrated in particular by two texts. First, there are the sequences in Iamblichus' *De mysteriis* in which hieroglyphs are specifically adapted for just such purposes in line with a methodological development informed by 'intellective interpretation' (*νοερὰ θεωρία*). Second are the reflections in Plotinus' *Enneades* on the possibility of non-discursive thought through a hieroglyphic medium.

The final chapter reassesses Horapollo's text with a view to establishing the extent to which the Neoplatonic developments covered in the context described in the preceding better account for content- and structure-specific features of the text than a more general appeal to a Hellenizing hieroglyphic tradition. If it is not possible to demonstrate conclusively that late Platonism is the philosophical environment in which the text was composed, then it is, I think, at the very least consistent with and even explanatorily fruitful to read the *Hieroglyphica* in that context.

Notes

- 1 Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]); Van de Walle, B., and Vergote, J., (trans.), ‘Traduction des *Hieroglyphica* d’Horapollon’ in *Chronique d’Égypte*, Vol. 18 (1943): pp. 39–89, 199–239; addenda *ibid.*, 22 (1947): pp. 251–259.
- 2 Eco, U., *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) and *Serendipities Language and Lunacy* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999).
- 3 Frede, M., ‘The History of Philosophy as a Discipline’ in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 85, No. 11, Eighty-Fifth Annual Meeting American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division (Nov., 1988): pp. 666–672; Frede, M., ‘Introduction: The Study of Ancient Philosophy’ in *id.*, *Essays in Ancient Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987): pp. ix–xxvii.
- 4 Baker, G. P., *Wittgenstein, Frege and the Vienna Circle* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988): p. xv cited in Morris, K. J., (ed.), *Wittgenstein’s Method: Neglected Aspects: Essays on Wittgenstein by Gordon Baker* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004): p. 12.
- 5 See Watts, E. J., *City and School in Late Antique Athens and Alexandria* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2006).

1 The text and author of the *Hieroglyphica*

The *Hieroglyphics* of Horus Apollo Nilous (Ὅρου Απόλλωνος Νειλώου Ἱερογλυφικά, *Horapollonis Niloi Hieroglyphica*) has a print history spanning five hundred years, during which thirty texts and translations have appeared in fifty-three substantive versions and sixty-six issues.¹ Though most popular during the 16th century, the textual tradition survives through editions once every generation or two into the 20th century, which saw at least five more, including a new *editio optima*. All editions have of course focussed principally on the Greek text itself, or on offering a translation of it, more often than not into Latin, though also into French, Italian, English, German, Spanish, and most recently Polish.²

The first manuscript³ containing the *Hieroglyphica* to be brought to European public attention in the Early Modern period was, according to a late *subscriptio* appearing on folio 75^r, bought on the island of Andros in the Aegean in June 1419 by Cristoforo, presbyter of Bundelmonti. It contained three texts: Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii Tyanensis*, Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*, and Proclus' *Elementa physica*. The first is written in two different manuscript hands, the latter two texts in a third. In addition to the *Vita Apollonii* and the *Elementa physica*, both of which appear together with the *Hieroglyphica* elsewhere,⁴ Aristotle's *Ethica ad Eudemum* also appears as a companion piece in several other manuscripts.⁵ However, despite the presence of Harpocration's *Lexicon* in Bibliotheca Vaticana graec. 871 (perhaps suggestive of an early opinion as to the text's generic affiliations), in general, the texts associated with the *Hieroglyphica* in the manuscript sources are too varied a miscellany to indicate any judgement as to formal genre characteristics which might have informed the inclusion of the *Hieroglyphica* amongst them. With it were included Pletho's *Magica eloquia Magorum* in both B.V. graec. 1011 and Bibliotheca Cardinalis Radulphi: Codex 49 and in October 1505 the first printed text of Horapollo was issued in an Aldine edition bound with Aesop's *Vita et Fabellae*, the writings of several other Greek fabulists, and a *Collectio proverbiorum*. Whether or not this may provide some indication of the kinds of associations the text had at that time, it is in general reasonable to suppose that these are precisely the kind of associations that either informed or were

developed as part of later judgements as to possible interpretative strategies.⁶ Even into the modern period we find Gardiner, for example, claiming that the text comprises ‘mystical assertions’, ‘grotesque allegorical reasons’, and ‘fantastic explanations’.⁷

In standard edited versions of the text, Book One comprises seventy sections; Book Two, one hundred and nineteen sections. These divisions pose few (if any) significant editorial problems in context since there is little room for doubt as to where each (typically short) explanation, or sequence of explanations, begins and ends.⁸ In other words, it is unproblematic to observe that the ratio of meanings per glyph is significantly lower in Book Two, where the meaning prefigures the glyph, than in Book One, where the movement is *vice versa*. The sections of Book One are fewer, though those of Book Two are on the whole briefer – all of which lend weight to the claim of the *incipit* to Book Two, according to which it is largely⁹ the work of a subsequent editor (called Philip in the *incipit* to Book One) of Horapollo’s original book.

On the one hand, insofar as it exhibits features in common with surviving Egyptian *onomastica* and Greek or Roman bilingual glossaries, Horapollo’s *Hieroglyphica* may (as historically has in fact been common) be situated generically within the tradition of historical linguistics. In a related context (also historically prominent as an approach to the text) it also exhibits features in common with late Imperial or early mediaeval encyclopaedias and natural history miscellanies, which, though materially related to the glossaries, can, on the other hand, be situated generically within the exegetical tradition, as noted earlier, to which the 5th–6th century encyclopaedias of Martianus Capella and Cassiodor, or the *Etymologiae sive Origines* of Isidore of Seville belong, and which, on this view, it prefigures.¹⁰ The long-standing precedent of these approaches has, however, given rise to an apparent incongruity: is the purpose of the text as a matter of fact glossographical (and therefore subject to critique arising out of developments within the decipherment project), or encyclopaedic and therefore to be assessed purely as a compendium of natural lore? The incongruity of a text half glossary, half encyclopaedia is, however, so I shall argue, wholly illusory. It is an illusion that arises precisely because the *Hieroglyphica* has typically been read purely as a catalogue of linguistic and natural claims, on which basis, both as linguistic and natural history, it has been found unsatisfactory.

Since the propositional analysis has failed to clarify the nature of the relationship between the natural and the hieroglyphic material, what I wish to argue instead is that under these circumstances it seems reasonable to look for an interpretation of the text as one which offers an interpretation, rather than a series of claims. The assumption that the *Hieroglyphica* is as a work of *historical* linguistics and natural *history* therefore needs to be reassessed in light of the methodological motivation for its structure. My starting-point for this is that the text is both explicit in its *hermeneutic* objectives and structurally unambiguous in the application thereof.

There is little rubric or preliminary framing to the text as presented, but there are brief statements at the beginning and end of each of the two books. The *incipit* to the second book reads:

ΩΡΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ ΝΕΙΛΩΟΥ τῆς τῶν παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἱερογλυφικῶν γραμμάτων ἐρμηνείας ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΝ. Διὰ δὲ τῆς δευτέρας πραγματείας, περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν τὸν λόγον ὕγιῃ σοι παραστήσομαι ἃ δὲ καὶ ἐξ ἄλλων ἀντιγράφων, οὐκ ἔχοντά τινα ἐξήγησιν, ἀναγκαίως ὑπέταξα.¹¹

The SECOND BOOK OF HORAPOLLO OF THE NILE on the interpretation of the hieroglyphic writings among the Egyptians. Now, in this second treatise I will set forth for you a sound account of the remaining ones which, having no explanation, I have necessarily added from other copies too.

The terms ‘interpretation’ (ἐρμηνεία) and ‘explanation’ (ἐξήγησις) crucially refer to genres of interpretative endeavour.¹² An inventory of the hieroglyphic signs explained in the text (and comprising glyphic depictions of items of almost always identifiably Egyptian provenance), arranged according to thematic relationships, provides an *index rerum* in parallel with the *index signorum*. Thus the *realia* fall into the same categories as the hieroglyphic signs they are intended to explain: mammals, birds, fish, and cosmological phenomena, as well as man and his occupations.¹³ The corresponding exegeses, therefore, draw precisely on resources that collate information on *realia*, the depictions of which the exegeses are intended to explain. However, an investigation designed to determine the extent of the influence of such resources on the exegetical content of the *Hieroglyphica* – except insofar as this might further support observations on the aggregation of source materials – will provide only a reconstruction of the line of historical continuity of the content preserved by the text, and not a clarification of the conditions under which they are presented. Specifically in the *Hieroglyphica*, then, uncovering the underlying principle of exegetic judgement will have to be determined by the precise nature of the relationship between the hieroglyphic signs and natural signs established in the interpretative exegeses themselves, rather than through source-criticism.

The text is certainly very unlikely to have been originally written in Egyptian (even in part), or to have appeared in Egyptian at any subsequent point,¹⁴ and the manuscript text itself is in fact in Greek. The attribution, by an apparent redactor named Philip, of the material treated (mostly in Book One) to *Horos Apollon* is nonetheless unlikely to be pseudepigraphical – an attempt to establish Egyptian provenance, and hence authorial authority. It is more likely to be a genuine acknowledgement of authorship. Annotations and additions by Philip, clearly indicated as such in the text at the beginning of Book Two, are structurally identifiable elements of the ‘interpretation of hieroglyphic writing among Egyptians’ (τῶν παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἱερογλυφικῶν γραμμάτων ἐρμηνεία).

Suda Ω 159 records two Horapollones (usually identified as grandfather and grandson), both *grammatici*. The elder Horapollo (fl. 408–450 A.D.) of Phaenebythis (a village in the Egyptian *nome* of Panopolis), taught in Alexandria, and afterwards in Constantinople, under Theodosius II. He was author of an enquiry into sacred enclosures or temples (*Τεμενικά*), commentaries (*ὑπομνήματα*) on Sophocles and Alcaeus, and a volume entitled *On Homer* (*Εἰς Ὅμηρον*), the choice of these three authors possibly reflecting an intention to provide a treatment of each of the three genres of tragedy, lyric, and epic.¹⁵

In a counter-petition filed against his estranged wife, a landowner in Phaenebythis named Flavius Horapollo, the younger Horapollo and son of Asclepiades, identifies himself as ‘the *clarissimus* and eloquent philosopher’:

[P] Αντιρρητικοί λιβελλοὶ παρ ἐμοῦ Ωραπολλῶ[νος Ἀσκληπιαδοῦ, τοῦ λαμπρο-τατοῦ κ[αὶ ἐλλογ]ιῆ φιλοσο[φου], κεκτηῖ ἐν Φενεβυθεῖ¹⁶

Counter-petition laid by Horapollo, son of Asclepiades, the very renowned and very eloquent philosopher, land-owner in Phaenebythis.

A third Horapollo is named in *P. Bodl.* 1.73.3.10 (reign of Heraclius) – here an inhabitant of the Herakliopolite *nome*.¹⁷ Given the continued family concern with philological and Egyptizing topics, the significance of the third bearer of the name of the author of the *Hieroglyphica* is primarily important as an indication that the name had currency beyond the borders of Phaenebythis and Alexandria.

Focussing attention on the younger Horapollo, then, we learn, as noted earlier, that Flavius Horapollo of Menouthis (fl. 474–491 A.D.) or ‘Psychapollo’,¹⁸ was the son of Asclepiades and both the nephew and son-in-law of Heraiscus, with whom he was arrested and tortured under Zeno’s persecution of the pagans.¹⁹ Formerly the author of the *Hieroglyphica* was identified with Horapollo the elder, but subsequent work by Maspero²⁰ and then Rémondon²¹ have identified Horapollo *Νεῖλωτος* with the younger man. Kaster thinks the matter ‘uncertain’ and counsels caution, though he goes on to argue that ‘the name “Horapollon” itself makes it virtually certain that H. [i.e. Fl. Horapollo] was a descendant of the gramm. Horapollon’.²² On the grounds that postulating a third Horapollo, also belonging to the same family, is perhaps less cautious than accepting an identification with one of the aforementioned bearers of the name follow Maspero and Rémondon, whose analyses of the *testimonia* of Damascius’ *Vita Isidori* make the identification very likely indeed.

The younger Horapollo continued to maintain the school in Alexandria with which his family had long been associated.²³ Described as both *γραμματικός* and *φιλόσοφος*, it has been supposed²⁴ that either some degree of social positioning by means of the deliberate appropriation of philosophical status to set his work apart from ‘mere’ grammar is involved, or, alternatively, that a contrast between professional affiliation and private interest is indicated. However, I see no reason not to concede that he was in fact both. The purpose of the following is, accordingly, to argue that the claims for his philosophical accomplishment

made in the counter-petition is not merely plausible (and not by virtue of the *testimonia* alone), but also substantive, formally, methodologically, and in terms of exegetical content.

Insofar as the *testimonia* are concerned, it is known that Heraiscus (the son of the elder Horapollo, and the brother of the younger Horapollo) addressed one of his books to Proclus, who, according to Damascius, apparently had considerable respect for the former's work.

λέγεται δὲ καὶ ὁ Πρόκλος ἑαυτοῦ ἀμείνω τὸν Ἡραῖσκον ὁμολογεῖν· ἃ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸς ᾔδει καὶ ἐκεῖνον εἰδέναι, ἃ δὲ Ἡραῖσκος οὐκέτι Πρόκλον.²⁵

Even Proclus is said to agree that Heraiscus was his superior; for what he himself knew the latter also knew, but what Heraiscus [knew] Proclus still did not.

In another passage concerning the death and burial of Heraiscus (Horapollo's uncle) prepared by Asclepiades (Horapollo's father) – about whom Horapollo also writes in the document quoted earlier – as one of the pious dead, he too had attained sainthood.²⁶

οὕτω μὲν ζῶντι συνῆν αἰεί τι θεοειδές· ἀποθανόντι δέ, ἐπειδὴ τὰ νομιζόμενα τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ὁ Ἀσκληπιάδης ἀποδιδόναι παρεσκευάζετο τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τὰς Ὀσίριδος ἐπὶ τῷ σώματι περιβολάς, αὐτίκα φωτὶ κατελάμπετο πανταχῇ τῶν σινδόνων ἀπόρρητα διαγράμματα, καὶ περὶ αὐτὰ καθεωρᾶτο φασμάτων εἶδη θεοπρεπῇ ἐπιδεικνύοντων τὴν ψυχὴν ἐναργῶς, ποίοις ἄρα θεοῖς ἐγγόνει συνέστιος.²⁷

Thus in life something godlike always attended him; and in death, when Asclepiades prepared to render him the marks of esteem prescribed for the priests and in particular the garments of Osiris on his body, ineffable figures on the burial cloths immediately shone everywhere, and around them there could be clearly seen the divine forms of visions which distinctly revealed his soul, and so with those gods he came to share the same hearth.

Without addressing for present purposes the question of why they are described as 'ineffable',²⁸ or the possibility that the 'figures' (*διαγράμματα*) bathed in light might be hieroglyphs, the overall impression of the affiliations and professional commitments of the family and associated school is both philosophical and rhetorical/grammatical – and that in an overtly late Neoplatonic mould as it is characterized by Damascius.²⁹

Even if the evidence for the original text having been composed in an earlier form in Egyptian is ultimately unconvincing, there is, nonetheless, a two-fold *prima facie* case for exploring specifically Coptic (as opposed to Ancient Egyptian) *corpora*, both as a material resource and as a possible compositional environment. First, according to the *incipit*, the *Hieroglyphica* which Horapollo published (ἐξήνεγκε) in Egyptian (*Αἰγυπτία φωνῇ*). Philip rendered (μετέφρασε) into Greek (εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον).³⁰ As Gardiner remarks, if this is meant

literally at a time when neither hieroglyphic, nor even demotic is in documentary use among the Egyptians, this indicates that the treatise was ‘written probably in Coptic but surviving only in a Greek translation’.³¹ If this were the case, then the text would represent *de facto* evidence of an Egyptian *hieroglyphica* in precisely this form.

ΩΡΟΥ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ ΝΕΙΛΩΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΓΛΥΦΙΚΑ ἃ ἐξήνεγκε μὲν αὐτὸς Αἰγυπτία φωνῇ, μετέφρασε δὲ Φίλιππος εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον.
<ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ>.³²

THE HIEROGLYPHICA OF HORAPOLLO OF THE NILE which he published in the Egyptian language and Philip translated into Greek.
<FIRST BOOK>.

On the basis of Greek works ascribed to Horapollo in the *Suda*, Lauth hypothesized that he composed the *Hieroglyphica* in Coptic before having learnt the Greek of his mature works.³³ The conclusion is, however, perfunctory. While superficially accounting for the dual attribution of the *incipit*, it explains neither the obviously Greek resources freely and frequently drawn on, nor several instances of Greek etymological word-play incomprehensible in Coptic.³⁴ A following point is narrower, but more telling of Coptic origins. The *Hieroglyphica* contains thirteen words designated ‘Egyptian’, of which at least nine have clear Coptic credentials.³⁵ There are besides three dozen additional Horapollonian explanations of hieroglyphs for which Sbordone has adduced Coptic language explanations.³⁶ Because the thesis that the *Hieroglyphica* is a Greek translation of a Coptic original depends on a persuasive case to the effect that the author has been misidentified as Flavius Horapollo of Phaenebythis, it faces apparently insuperable difficulties of historical context.³⁷ It is not so much the availability of obvious predecessors in the genre from within the Greek tradition, but the fact that such Coptic material as exists on hieroglyphic Egyptian belongs either to polemical Christian texts of the period, condemning their use, or to broadly Gnosticizing³⁸ alternatives belonging to the Nag‘-Hammâdi corpus. The pre-Christian tradition of Coptic literature (a phenomenon of the 3rd century), though by no means homogenous, is nonetheless a considerably less fruitful resource for parallel compositions. Had our text then belonged in an explicitly Coptic environment, and originally been composed in Coptic, it would almost certainly have been a Christian text. There is no trace of the *Hieroglyphica* showing any such provenance.

Whether accurate knowledge of historical hieroglyphic practice or the (putative) desire on the part of a native Egyptian (Coptic) speaker to recover paganism from advancing Christian influence constitute sufficient grounds for supposing the text was originally written in Coptic is open to serious doubt, even without the evidence of the Greek works securely identified as belonging to the *oeuvres* of the elder and junior Horapollones.

Notes

- 1 See *Bibliography: Text Editions*.
- 2 *Ibid.*
- 3 Bibliotheca Laurentiana Medicea, Florentiae: Plutei 69: Codex 27.
- 4 Monacense graec. 419 (the only other c. 14th manuscript) and Bibliotheca Veneta Divi Marci: Codex 391, respectively.
- 5 E.g. Bibliotheca Laurentiana Medicea, Florentiae: Plutei 81: Codex 15; *ibid.*, Plutei 81: Codex 20; and al.
- 6 See e.g. Athanasius Kircher, *Prodromus Coptus sive Aegyptiacus* (Rome: Typis S. Cong. de propag: Fide, 1636).
- 7 Gardiner, Sir A. H., *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927). Gardiner remarks: ‘the tradition of the classical writers and the early Fathers, whose confused and mutually contradictory statements, if they point anywhere, point in a direction diametrically opposed to the truth’ (p. 11). Elements of ‘sane testimony’ (*ibid.*), he claims, survive in the historians, but are contrasted with the ‘mystical assertions’, ‘grotesque allegorical reasons’ and ‘fantastic explanations’ of the Greek exegeses.
- 8 Though see 2.62–2.62b for one possible example. On the structure, uniformity and variation of each section, see Chapter 2, section 2.2, in this book.
- 9 Van de Walle and Vergote argue that perhaps the first thirty and last two entries of Book Two may also be original (i.e. predate Philip’s editorial work), on the grounds that they too include evidence of (knowledge of) genuinely Egyptian material; ‘Traduction des Hieroglyphica d’Horapollon’ in *Chronique d’Égypte*, Vol. 18 (1943): pp. 39–89, 199–239; addenda *ibid.*, 22 (1947): pp. 251–259.
- 10 Cf. Hüllen, W., *English Dictionaries, 800–1100: The Topical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999): pp. 43 ff.
- 11 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.t.1–5; all references to Greek and Latin texts in footnotes use the Latin titles for works listed in *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae® Digital Library*. Ed. Maria C. Pantelia. Irvine, CA: University of California. [URL: www.tlg.uci.edu] and The Packard Humanities Institute (PHI): Classical Latin Texts [URL: <http://latin.packhum.org/>].
- 12 On the differences between the interpretative genres cf. Cribiore, R., ‘Review of *Glossaria bilingua altera* (C. Gloss. Biling. II). *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete, Beiheft 8* by Johannes Kramer’ in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (May 8, 2002) [URL: <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2002/2002-05-08.html> accessed August 7th 2017].
- 13 Cf. Perry, B. E., ‘Review of *Paradoxographorum Graecorum Reliquiae. Recognovit, brevi adnotatione critica instruxit, latine reddidit* by Alexander Giannini’ in *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 89, No. 1 (Jan., 1968): pp. 119–21.
- 14 The possibility that the text was originally published in ‘Egyptian’ (Coptic?) is provided for in the subtitle to Book One, though this may depend on the exact senses of the two aorist verbs used there: ἐξήνεγκε (‘produced, published’, ‘cited, adduced’) to describe the work of Horapollo himself and μετέφρασε (‘paraphrased, translated’) to describe the work of the editor, Philip; Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.t.1–5.
- 15 Cf. Dionysius Halicarnassensis, *De compositione verborum* 24.21–30.
- 16 Horapollo, *Exemplar antirrheticum* 1.1–2 = P. Cair. Masp. 3 67295 = Maspero, J., ‘Horapollon et la fin du paganisme égyptien’ in *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 11 (1914): pp. 163–195.
- 17 Litinas, N., ‘Hierakapollon, the Title of Panos polis and the Names in -απόλλων’ in *Ancient Society*, Vol. 37 (2007): pp. 97–106.
- 18 Zacharias Mytilenaeus, *Vita Severi* 32.
- 19 See Damascius, *Vita Isidori* (ap. Sudam, Hesychium, Photium et e cod. Vat. 1950) 314.1–9; 317.1–8.
- 20 Maspero, J., ‘Horapollon et la fin du paganisme égyptien’ in *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale*, Vol. 11 (1914): pp. 163–195.

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- 21 Rémondon, R., ‘L’Égypte et la suprême résistance au christianisme (Ve–VIIe siècles)’ in *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale*, Vol. 51 (1952): pp. 63–78.
- 22 Kaster, R. A., *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988): pp. 294–97.
- 23 Maspero, J., ‘Horapollo et la fin du paganisme égyptien’ in *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale*, Vol. 11 (1914): pp. 165–166.
- 24 Zacharias Mytilenaeus, *Vita Severi* 32; see also Maspéro (1914): p. 178, n. 1.
- 25 Damascius, *Vita Isidori* (ap. Photium, Bibl. codd. 181, 242) 107.15–16.
- 26 P. Cair. Masp. 3 67295 = *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 11: pp. 165–166.
- 27 Damascius, *Vita Isidori* (ap. Sudam, Hesychium, Photium et e cod. Vat. 1950) 174.12–17.
- 28 On the use of hieroglyphs independently of spoken language see Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.1.7–11.
- 29 Damascius, *In Phaedonem* (versio 1) 172.1–3.
- 30 Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): p. 1. ΩΡΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΟΣ ΝΕΙΛΩΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΓΛΥΦΙΚΑ ἃ ἐξήνεγκε μὲν αὐτός Αἰγυπτία φωνῇ μετέφρασε δὲ Φίλιππος εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον.
- 31 Gardiner, Sir A. H., *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927): p. 11.
- 32 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.t.1–5.
- 33 ‘Il Lauth immagina ch’ egli componesse il libro in Copto quando ancora non era padrone della lingua greca, alla quale avrebbe finito col dedicarsi completamente in età matura’, but remarks ‘Questa trama d’ipotesi è tutta infondata.’ Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): p. xxviii. See Lauth, F. J., *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-philologischen u. historischen Classe* (München: k. b. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1876).
- 34 E.g. 2.46. [Πῶς ἄνθρωπον ἰατρεύοντα ἑαυτὸν ἀπὸ χρησμοῦ]; 2.55. [Πῶς ἄνθρωπον μυστικόν].
- 35 See Appendix 3.
- 36 Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): 1.1, 3–7, 10–11, 16–17, 19–22, 26–27, 29, 31, 37–39, 42–45, 47–48, 52, 54–55, 57, 59, 63, 67–68, 70; 2.8, 12–13, 15, 17, 28.
- 37 Note the edition of Martin Requier (Amsterdam–Paris: Musier 1779 [reissued 1782]), in which he rejects the authorship of Horapollo, attributing the text to Philip and the 15th century.
- 38 I make the qualification in light of the difficulties of maintaining consistency of application of the term. See Williams, M. A., *Rethinking “Gnosticism”: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

2 Linguistic signs

2.1 The historical use of Egyptian hieroglyphs

In order to properly assess Horapollo's text as an early contribution in a philological context it is not surprising that the standards applied have typically been those of the historically reconstructed practice of ancient Egypt in recording its language. That reconstruction, of course, raises its own theoretical issues. A brief outline of its principal contours is therefore supplied in this chapter, not primarily in an attempt to settle the theoretical issues, but rather to highlight the fact that the appearance of fixity provided for by the ability of Egyptologists to broadly agree on a wide range of readings of hieroglyphic texts is not given once and for all, but is dependent on new theoretical models and emphases within a broadly recognizable field of approaches exhibiting similarities, overlapping commonalities, and dissimilarities.

In his discussion of the varieties of written Egyptian, Gardiner (1927) arranges his remarks according to each of four script-types: hieroglyphic, hieratic, demotic, and Coptic. These types variously connote several phases of the Egyptian language, a range of means and media of production, and the classically familiar distinction of secular or religious use. As a whole the scripts can be found carved or painted on stone (though only hieroglyphic is *typically* glyphic) or written in ink on papyrus using a reed stylus, and are, broadly speaking, employed either for ritual or literary and administrative purposes.

The Egyptian language exhibits five diachronic variants:

- 1 Old Egyptian, used in Dynasties I–VIII, dating 3180 B.C. to 2240 B.C.
- 2 Middle Egyptian, used in Dynasties IX–XI, dating 2240 B.C. to 1990 B.C.
- 3 Late Egyptian, used in Dynasties XVIII–XXIV, dating 1573 B.C. to 715 B.C.
- 4 Demotic, used from Dynasty XXV to the late Roman period, dating 715 B.C. to 470 A.D.
- 5 Coptic, used from the 3rd to the 16th centuries¹

Middle Egyptian is generally taught as the standard form of the language. Hieroglyphic Egyptian appears during the Archaic period (i.e. under Dynasties

I and II), not later than 3000 B.C., and the latest example of hieroglyphic Egyptian at Philae is dated 394 A.D. Egyptian constitutes a branch of the Afro-Asiatic or Hamito-Semitic family of languages, and as such is related not only to Semitic Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, and Akkadian, but also the Berber, Chadic, Cushitic, Beja, and Omotic language groups. In very general terms, this affinity is shown not only in vocabulary, but in the tendency to effect semantic variation through vowel variation² in fixed consonantal stems, reduplication, and affixes.

Hieroglyphics are read either vertically (top to bottom) in columns or horizontally (usually right to left, but occasionally left to right) in rows. The front of a sign (e.g. the faces of signs depicting persons, animals, or birds) faces the beginning of the inscription in which it occurs. Generally, modern texts read left to right. In an effort to achieve symmetry and to avoid gaps, signs are often grouped and read top to bottom within a sequence inscribed in rows. The standard reference work on the subject lists seven hundred and forty-three signs.

Hieroglyphic is one of three scripts developed in ancient Egyptian. The other two are hieratic and enchorial (otherwise known as 'demotic'). Hieratic is a cursive form of hieroglyphic. In other words, it consists of characters freely adapted from the hieroglyphic script that was originally used primarily as a script for inscriptions, rather than use on papyrus. Subsequently, both hieroglyphic and hieratic are found in papyrus manuscripts.

The primary interest of the decipherment endeavour was the reconstruction of the language of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. As a result of that endeavour a distinction was drawn between sound-signs (phonograms) and sense-signs (ideograms) into which – for most pedagogical purposes – hieroglyphic texts are analyzed.

The latter comprise one-, two-, or three-consonant signs. There are the twenty-four uniliteral phonograms constituting an alphabet. Because hieroglyphics are unpointed, the consonants are conventionally vocalized using the vowel *e* in all cases, except after glottal stops, where *a* is used. In addition to uniliteral phonograms (the alphabet), there are also biliteral phonograms (with the phonetic value of two alphabetic consonants), and triliteral phonograms (with the phonetic value of three alphabetic consonants). Uniliteral phonograms are also used as phonetic complements in support of multiliteral signs, specifying one of its component phonetic values. Conversely, multiliteral signs are sometimes used as phonetic determinatives, specifying in a single sign the phonetic value of preceding uniliteral signs.

The types of hieroglyphic phonograms then are the following (signs in parentheses are not pronounced):

- 1 uniliteral phonogram cf. *h* in *h+n+(hn)*+(MAN WITH HAND TO MOUTH) = 'sentence', 'saying'
- 2 biliteral phonogram cf. *iw* in *iw+y+t*+(HOUSE) = 'street'
- 3 triliteral phonogram cf. *nh* in *nh*+(MAN WITH HAND TO MOUTH) = 'swear', 'oath'

- 4 (unilateral phonetic complement) cf. (*ʒ*) in *šʒ*+(*ʒ*)+(PAPYRUS ROLLED UP, TIED, AND SEALED) = 'appoint', 'command'
- 5 (biliteral phonetic determinative) cf. (*hn*) in *h*+*n*+(*hn*)+(MAN WITH HAND TO MOUTH) = 'sentence', 'saying'
- 6 (triliteral phonetic determinative) cf. (*iʕh*) in *i*+*ʕ*+*h*+(*iʕh*) = 'moon'

Ideograms have typically been taught as sense- rather than sound-signs. They comprise pictograms, ostensibly depicting the object that is meant by the sign, and ideograms, depicting an object the meaning of the sign for which semantically related to the meaning of the word in which the ideogram appears.

- 7 pictogram cf. *rʕ* [= (SUN)] in *rʕ*+(STROKE DETERMINATIVE) = 'sun'
- 8 ideogram cf. *rʕ* [= (SUN)] in *rʕ*+(STROKE DETERMINATIVE) = 'day'

Associated with these are two further sign types. The first are stroke determinatives. These are a short stroke following pictograms and ideograms indicating that the latter signify individual samples of the item depicted. They are therefore used in distinction to a three stroke sign for plural forms. The second are generic determinatives, typically appearing at the end of hieroglyphic words in Middle Kingdom texts (though most likely the original orthographic form of the word historically), which indicate the general semantic field of preceding phonetically spelled word.

- 9 (stroke determinative) cf. (STROKE DETERMINATIVE) in *rʕ*+(STROKE DETERMINATIVE) = 'sun'
- 10 (generic determinative) cf. (PINTAIL DUCK) in *s* [for *ʒ*(*ʒ*)]+*t*+(PINTAIL DUCK) = 'pintail duck'

In any case where a sign is used with no pictographic, ideographic, or determinative value, it is *eo ipso* a phonogram and a rebus. A sign is a rebus if the word for the item the glyph depicts has a phonetic value in Egyptian which is not being used pictographically or ideographically. If also lexically complete (i.e. forms a complete Egyptian word), it is *eo ipso* a logogram.

- 11 rebus cf. *iw* [= (NEWBORN BUBALIS OR HARTEBEEST)] in *iw*+*y*+*t*+(HOUSE) = 'street'
- 12 logogram cf. *sʒ* [for *ʒ*ʒ = (PINTAIL DUCK)] in *sʒ* [for *ʒ*ʒ = (PINTAIL DUCK)]+(STROKE DETERMINATIVE)+(SEATED MAN) = 'son'

Gardiner also lists the following non-standard features of orthography:

- 1 abbreviations
- 2 graphic transpositions
- 3 transpositions with honorific intent
- 4 monograms

- 5 defective and superfluous writings
- 6 group-writing
- 7 determination of compounds
- 8 avoidance of the repetition of like consonantal signs in contiguity
- 9 doubtful readings

The distinction between sound-signs and sense-signs in hieroglyphic Egyptian is a product of the standard process of transliteration, whose object is to preserve in a normalized form only the unreduplicated phonetic information to be found in a hieroglyphic inscription. The standard practice of transliteration of hieroglyphic Egyptian is non-reversible. That is, it is not intended that a transliterated word be reconstructable in accordance with hieroglyphic orthography solely by reference to its transliterated form. Transliteration does not involve one-to-one correspondence with hieroglyphic orthography, but provides the (unpointed and) normalized phonetic value of the glyphs. Hieroglyphic transliterations, in other words, are conceived with the aim of teaching the student how to *read*, but do not thereby make it possible to write hieroglyphic Egyptian.

To illustrate this, compare the five hieroglyphs³ constituting standard Middle Egyptian orthography for a word meaning ‘strength’, depicting the following objects respectively: a ripple-of-water, a branch, a human-placenta, bread, and a forearm-with-hand-holding-stick. According to the standard account, the first four are phonograms (the second biliteral, with the third and fourth uniliteral phonetic complements which spell out the two elements of the preceding bilateral sign) and the fifth an ideogram (in this case, determinative).

A non-Egyptian-speaking reader learns that M3, for example, depicts a branch, which has the phonetic value *ht*, and means ‘wood’, and determines through syntactic considerations that the phonetic value is here in use. The reader also learns that D40 depicts a forearm-with-hand-holding-stick with a syntactically ideographic or determinative value signifying a class of words concerning force or effort. That is, with phonetically redundant detail appearing between <>, the full sequence reads: <ripple-of-water> (= *n* = <‘water’>) + <branch> (= *ht* = <‘wood’>) + <human-placenta> (= <*h*> = <‘placenta’>) + <bread> (= <*t*> = <‘bread’>) + <forearm-with-hand-holding-stick> (= <*nht*> = <‘strong’>), i.e. *nht* = <‘strong’>.

This then in outline is how a non-Egyptian-speaking reader might be taught to understand the five hieroglyphs comprising the word for ‘strength’. By contrast, the Egyptian-speaker, for whom the phonetic reading is straightforwardly *nht*, the issue is instead a matter of spelling. That is to say, what are identified in the Egyptian-language readings of the glyphs are not, then, utterances, concepts, or objects so distinguished, but precisely the (non-arbitrary) Egyptian signs *n*, *ht*, *h*, *t*, and *nht*, without having to employ any distinctions as to phonetic or ideographic usage. The answers to the questions, ‘how is the inscription pronounced?’ and ‘what does the inscription mean?’ are in each case the same, namely *nht*.

The question ‘what does the inscription depict?’, however, is answered by spelling out the inscription sign by sign. In English this may be done by assigning sign-references or by *describing* the item depicted by each sign. For an Egyptian-speaker, however, the spelling of the inscription might plausibly have involved *naming* the sign, in Egyptian, as follows: *n, ht, h, t, nht*.

Standard hieroglyphic transliteration does not preserve this feature of hieroglyphic orthography. In order to do so without loss of phonetic information that is preserved by transliteration, it would necessary to adopt an augmented method of ‘transliteration’.⁴ So, for example, the sequence described for the Egyptian word for ‘strong’ (*nht*) might be transliterated (with phonetic complements in <> and determinative superscripted): *n-ht-<h>-<t>-^{nht}*. This is not intended to be a hypothesis about how in fact hieroglyphic texts may historically have been spelled out, but only to preserve a sign-for-sign correspondence between text and transliteration in the sense in which I here use the term.

2.2 Meaning in Horapollo

The claim of this section – plausibly motivated by general observations on the structure and content of the text outlined that follows – is that Horapollonian semantics involves distinctions between linguistic expressions (*λέξεις*), their meanings (*σημαινόμενα* or *λεγόμενα*), and the objects or name-bearers (*πράγματα*) which they depict or to which they refer.⁵ This claim is developed independently of my view (developed in Chapter 3) of how Horapollo uses natural signs as *evidence* or *grounds* for inferential argumentation.

My question is how Horapollo’s explanations establish a relation between the item depicted by the sign and the sign’s *semantic content* – and this, in turn, involves some discussion of the problem of how to understand *what kind* of things Horapollonian meanings are.

Each section of the *Hieroglyphica* consists of three first-order elements: sign, meaning, and explanation.⁶ The signs are *written* or *drawn* (*γράφω*), *depicted* (*ζωγραφέω*), *hieratically carved* (*ἱερογλυφέω*), *applied* (*προστίθημι*), or *arranged* (*τάσσω*), and are in this respect specified by reference to their *production*. Explanations are introduced by any of several causal conjunctions (*γάρ*, *διότι* (or *διὰ τὸ*), *ἐπειδή*, *ἐπειδήπερ*, *ἐπεὶ*) or by a prepositional or adverbial phrase (*ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ὀνόματος ἑρμηνείας*, *ἑρμηνευθὲν*). Various, both the sign-user and the sign itself are described as *writing* (*γράφω*), *drawing* (*ζωγραφέω*), or *saying* (*λέγω*) what they mean, in addition to the rarer alternatives *alluding to* (*αἰνίσσομαι*), *thinking of* (*νομίζω*), *indicating* (*μηνύω*), *exhibiting* (*ἐμφαίνω*), and *adumbrating* (*σκιάζω*).⁷ The terms for the function of the glyphs that are most common by far are ‘make known’ (*δηλόω*) and ‘signify’ (*σημαίνω*), however, the two are not applied in such a way as to distinguish what is directly named and what indirectly signified respectively.⁸

The arrangement of these elements in the structure of an entry can take one of two forms, depending on whether several glyphs will be identified as having a single meaning, or *vice versa*. In the majority of cases, the following

form predominates: (i) the *significandum* is followed by (ii) a participial phrase (σημαίνοντες, γράφοντες, δηλοῦντες, etc.) governing it, then (iii) the hieroglyph itself, followed by (iv) the means or mode of its production (γραφοῦσιν, ζωγραφοῦσιν), and finally, (v) a clause introduced by a causal conjunction (γάρ, διότι, ἐπειδή, ἐπεὶ) providing the reason or logical link between the first and the second terms.⁹

[Πῶς αἰῶνα σημαίνουσιν]. Αἰῶνα σημαίνοντες, ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην γράφουσι, διὰ τὸ αἰῶνια εἶναι στοιχεῖα.¹⁰

[How they signify eternity]. To signify eternity they depict the sun and moon, on account of being eternal elements.

In a minority of cases the structure is reversed: (i) the hieroglyph is followed by (ii) a passive participial phrase (ζωγράφουμενον, γράφόμενος) denoting the means or mode of production, then (iii) the *significandum*, followed by (iv) δηλοῖ, σημαίνει, etc. governing it, often (though not always) followed by (v) a causal clause.

The distribution of these two main variations in arrangement in general marks the main distinguishing features of the entries as presented in the two books of which the *Hieroglyphica* is comprised. Immediately following the *incipit* of Book Two we have a sequence of thirty sections following the second type of arrangement. The significance of this variation at this point in the text is perhaps best brought out by the *incipit* itself. At face value, the text from this point on will include ‘a sound account of what remains’ (περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν τὸν λόγον ὕγιᾶ) which is contrasted with ‘things from other copies, which do not have any exegesis, I have necessarily added’ (ἃ δὲ καὶ ἐξ ἄλλων ἀντιγράφων, οὐκ ἔχοντά τινα ἐξήγησιν, ἀναγκαίως ὑπέταξα). In other words, we have a distinction made between material thought by ‘Philip’ to belong to the original material presented by Horapollo and additional material added by the editor himself, which may or may not be original. As noted by subsequent (contemporary) editors of the text,¹¹ these first thirty comments, like many of the hieroglyphs cited in Book One, contain signs for which genuinely hieroglyphic Egyptian antecedents can be found. Notwithstanding the switch in structural arrangement, then, the Egyptological evidence actually strengthens the case for the assumption that these constitute ‘what remains’ (τῶν λοιπῶν) of the originally Horapollonian material. The subsequent switch back to the original arrangement and glyphs apparently unattested in the Egyptian record, then, marks the beginning of the supplementary material.

There are two uses of the word *σημεῖον* in the text, and five instances of its occurrence, all in Book One.¹² In three instances Horapollo uses *σημεῖον* in the sense of what I shall call a *natural* sign: ‘the lion . . . when asleep keeps them (eyes) open, which is a sign of watching’ (ὁ λέων . . . κοιμώμενος δὲ, ἀνεωρότας τούτους [ὀφθαλμοὺς] ἔχει, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τοῦ φυλάσσειν σημεῖον) at 1.19. In this sense, a sign is an indication of something in the nature of the item (in these cases, creatures) depicted (cf. a wet nose as a *sign* of good health in

a dog) without reference to what the depiction of that indication in a hieroglyphic sign means. 1.49 and 1.70 are similarly natural signs in this sense – the first, the oryx scraping the ground with its hooves,¹³ the second, ‘many other signs subsisting in the *nature* of crocodiles’ (Ἰκανῶν δὲ καὶ ἄλλων ὑπαρχόντων σημείων ἐν τῇ τῶν κροκοδείλων φύσει). On two occasions Horapollo also uses the word in the sense of *hieroglyphic* sign: ‘to signify the terrible they make use of the same sign’ (Φοβερόν δὲ σημαίνοντες, τῷ αὐτῷ χρῶνται σημείῳ) at 1.20. 1.50 is another *signum hieroglyphicum*: ‘they also make use of the same sign when they want to write discernment’ (τῷ αὐτῷ δὲ σημείῳ χρῶνται καὶ κρίσιν θέλοντες γράψαι). A hieroglyphic sign furthermore is described as bearing a ‘form’ (σχῆμα), which is to say the character as written, for example, ‘a cynocephalus . . . standing upright, and raising its hands to heaven’ (κυνοκέφαλον . . . ἐστῶτα καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐρανὸν ἐπαίροντα), or ‘the form of the moon’ (σελήνης σχῆμα).¹⁴

The section headings indiscriminately describe either what is meant by the glyph under consideration or how the ‘Egyptians’ signify some particular feature of broadly natural scientific interest, but the reader is in no doubt that the section is concerned with both, without direct indication of the method of juxtaposition of the two. In this section I raise the following question concerning the dual use of the term *σημεῖον* as hieroglyphic sign and natural sign: how are the written signs related to the objects they depict? In order to answer this question, we first need to be clear about how linguistic samples (written or spoken) and features of the world (objects or facts) might be conceived of as related at all and in what sense, or under what circumstances the semantic relation between the two varies.

The key section for present purposes, 1.27, draws a distinction that suggests a theoretical influence on the text.¹⁵

[Πῶς τὸ λέγειν]. Τὸ λέγειν δὲ γράφοντες, γλῶσσαν ζωγραφοῦσι καὶ ὕφαιμον ὀφθαλμόν, τὰ μὲν πρωτεῖα τῆς λαλιᾶς τῇ γλώσση μερίζοντες, τὰ δευτερεῖα δὲ ταύτης τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς· οὕτω γὰρ οἱ γε λόγοι τελείως τῆς ψυχῆς καθεστήκασι, πρὸς τὰ κινήματα αὐτῆς συµμεταβάλλοντες. [Ἦπερ καὶ ἑτέρα λαλιὰ παρ’ Αἰγυπτίοις ὀνομάζεται]. ἑτέρως δὲ τὸ λέγειν σημαίνοντες, γλῶσσαν καὶ χεῖρα ὑποκάτω γράφουσι, τῇ μὲν γλώσση τὰ πρωτεῖα τοῦ λόγου φέρειν δεδωκότες, τῇ δὲ χειρί, ὥς τὰ τῆς γλώσσης βουλήματα ἀνυούση, τὰ δεύτερα.¹⁶

[How (they signify) speaking]. To write *speaking* they depict a tongue and a blood-shot eye because they assign the primary features of speech to the tongue, but the secondary features of it to the eyes. For these utterances are brought about entirely of the soul, changing in accordance with its movements; [just in the same way as speech is expressed in words in a different way by Egyptians]. And to signify speaking differently they depict a tongue and a hand beneath, giving the primary features of speech to the tongue to produce, and the secondary features to the hand, as achieving the intentions of the tongue.

The crucial contribution here is the claim that there are ‘movements of the soul’ (τῆς ψυχῆς . . . κινήματα) in accordance with which utterances (λόγοι) change. This raises two further questions, namely, how are utterances related to movements of the soul, and how are movements of the soul related to factual conditions?

Any attempt to answer these questions must exploit, then, the brief but specific evidence presented by the text itself. If that evidence does not offer an explicit theoretical statement, then it at least indicates familiar assumptions as to what kind of relations obtain between language and thought. Insofar as utterances (λόγοι) are brought about ‘entirely of the soul’ (τελείως τῆς ψυχῆς), changing in accordance with its movements (κινήματα) we have a conception of linguistic expressions as also *corresponding* to the internal psychic conditions.

In the absence of any evidence of an historically Egyptian account of any relationship of correspondence between linguistic expressions and movements of the soul it may safely be inferred that the correspondence is not an otherwise unattested report of an Egyptian belief, but Horapollo’s own explanation of why it is that the Egyptians assign the various features of speech to the tongue and the eyes. That being the case, Horapollo offers a rare indication of an at least partially theorized account of language, involving at least two possible kinds of relation: first, a *representational* relation between written sign and object depicted, and second, a relation of *correspondence* between sign and movements of the soul. If, as I have described it, Horapollo’s sections consist of the three elements of glyph, meaning, and the item depicted by the glyph (in terms of the properties of which the meaning is explained), then a plausible interpretation of the non-mimetic correspondence between sign and movements of the soul is that it describes a *conceptual* and/or *causal* relation.

2.3 Neoplatonic theories of meaning

Though there are further types of signification, for which inferential and metaphysical explanations are given, each of which will be dealt with in the chapters that follow, both are dependent on the basic semantic relation in focus discussed earlier in this chapter. Here, then, the emphasis is on a type of explanation concerned with how individuals – particular items or features of the world – are meant. This is explored through two explicitly theorized accounts of meaning or signification developed in the Neoplatonic commentaries on relevant material in Aristotle. The first is a bipartite theory of meaning, Porphyrian in outline, according to which the individual terms of a language directly signify things or their properties through a naming relation. The second, a tripartite theory, explains terms as signifying things only indirectly, by virtue of directly signifying concepts, which are thereby intermediate between language and individuals in the world. Predications are, on the latter theory, linguistic expressions that signify the composition of concepts in factual conditions.¹⁷ In a sophisticated version of the tripartite theory, as developed by Iamblichus, words signify neither common concepts, nor particular things, but particular things insofar as

they fall under common concepts. The motivation for examining a conception of meaning (specifically current amongst Neoplatonists at the time and place of the text's composition) derives from what I take to be the uncontroversial observation that a text intended to provide *explanations* of the meaning of a series of hieroglyphs exhibits, explicitly or otherwise, some conception of what constitutes an explanation of meaning. This conception may plausibly be thought to inform the explanatory claim encountered in 1.27, according to which hieroglyphs may signify concepts ('movements of the soul') under which natural phenomena fall, rather than representing those phenomena themselves.

It is the relationship between these three elements – linguistic, conceptual, and natural – and the Neoplatonic (specifically *Iamblichean*) theory of meaning, which itself exhibits both Peripatetic and Stoic features, that is the subject of this section.

The primary occasion for the Neoplatonic commentators' interest in semantics is the controversy over the scope, aim, or purpose (*σκοπός*) of the *Categories*. The controversy can be summarized as follows. There are three major readings of the aim or purpose of the *Categories* according to whether the subject being addressed is construed as realities (*πράγματα*), linguistic expressions (*φωναί*), or concepts (*νοήματα*). As presented by, for example, Iamblichus,¹⁸ these readings need not, however, be understood to be mutually exclusive – and in fact a *unified* account is precisely what is required. A version of the unified conception of the *σκοπός* of the *Categories* had become canonical for later Neoplatonists in the form: 'the subject of the *Categories* concerns expressions in so far as they signify objects, through the medium of concepts' (*ἐστὶν ὁ σκοπὸς τῶν Κατηγοριῶν περὶ φωνῶν σημαινουσῶν πράγματα διὰ μέσων νοημάτων*).¹⁹ The reason, then, the semantic question is materially implicated in the *σκοπός* question is that this canonical expression of the solution to the latter is formulated in terms of the solution to the former. The relationship between the three possible answers to the question of the subject-matter of the *Categories* is a semantic relationship. Linguistic expressions *signify* objects and that semantic relation is *mediated* through concepts. This solution to the *σκοπός* question, however, was neither universally accepted, nor univocally understood. The primary point of controversy is the mediation of concepts (*νοήματα*) between linguistic expressions (*φωναί*) and realities (*πράγματα*). Further controversies arise concerning what exactly 'concepts' and 'realities' are. Moreover, the attribution of the various proposals attested is a similarly vexed issue. Nor is the identification of scholastic divisions on the matter, even where possible, clearly desirable.²⁰

It is at any rate clear that the idea that *two* kinds of thing are signified by linguistic expressions (*φωναί*), one direct, the other indirect – i.e. concepts (*νοήματα*) and objects (*πράγματα*) respectively – is the Aristotelian view as presented at the opening of *De interpretatione*.²¹ It is also clear that the main alternative solution excluded the mediating role of concepts.²² Thirdly, in the course of his synthesis of the preceding traditions Simplicius further specifies a crucial link establishing the precise relationship between the direct and indirect

significata of linguistic expressions, by means of ‘cases’ (πτώσεις) – a link which he attributes to ‘members of the Academy’ (οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας).²³

The first question facing those who believe in the mediating role of concepts is the motivation for introducing them between words and things. According to the Porphyrian account,²⁴ the primary significance of words derives from a ‘first imposition of expressions’ (τῆς πρώτης θέσεως τῶν λέξεων) signifying things directly. This is followed by a ‘second imposition’ (τῆς δευτέρας θέσεως) concerning the use of terms for parts of language, e.g. noun (ὄνομα) and verb/adjective (ῥῆμα). Here is his account of the origins of significant language.

Φημὶ τοίνυν ὅτι τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκκειμένων δηλωτικὸς γενόμενος καὶ σημαντικὸς αὐτὸς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἦλθεν ἐπὶ τὸ καὶ διὰ τῆς φωνῆς κατονομάζειν καὶ δηλοῦν ἕκαστον. καὶ γέγονεν αὐτῷ ἡ πρώτη χρῆσις τῶν λέξεων εἰς τὸ παραστήσαι ἕκαστον τῶν πραγμάτων διὰ φωνῶν τινων καὶ λέξεων, καθ’ ἣν δὴ σχέσιν τῶν φωνῶν τὴν πρὸς τὰ πράγματα τότε μὲν τι πρᾶγμα βάθρον κέκληκεν, τότε δὲ ἄνθρωπον, τότε δὲ κύνα, ἥλιον δὲ τότε, καὶ πάλιν τότε μὲν τὸ χρῶμα λευκόν, τότε δὲ μέλαν, καὶ τότε μὲν ἀριθμόν, τότε δὲ μέγεθος, καὶ τότε μὲν δίπηχυ, τότε δὲ τρίπηχυ, καὶ οὕτως ἐκάστῳ πράγματι λέξεις καὶ ὀνόματα τέθεικεν σημαντικὰ αὐτῶν καὶ μηνυτικὰ διὰ τῶν τοιούτων τῆς φωνῆς ψόφων.²⁵

I claim that once man himself had come to be able to indicate and to signify the things around him, he also came to name and to indicate each thing by means of words. Thus his first use of linguistic expressions came to be to communicate each thing by means of certain words and expressions. In accordance with this relation between words and things, this thing here is called a ‘chair’, that a ‘man’, this a ‘dog’, that ‘the sun’, and again, this colour is called ‘white’, that ‘black’, and this is called ‘number’, that ‘size’, this ‘two cubits’, and that ‘three cubits’. In this way words and expressions have been assigned to each thing which serve to signify and reveal that thing by employing particular sounds of the voice.²⁶

The crucial feature of this account is that first-imposition expressions signify things directly without the aid of mediating concepts. One possible explanation for the absence of concepts from the account might be that it derives from Stoic rather than Aristotelian sources.²⁷ Another possible explanation is that first- and second-imposition expressions may be thought to provide a systematic distinction between the respective subject-matter of the *Categories* and *De interpretatione*: simple expressions (ἀπλᾶι φωναί) and the first synthesis of simple expressions (τῆς πρώτης συνθέσεως τῶν ἀπλῶν φωνῶν) as constituents of assertion (ἀπόφανσις) respectively – followed by a second synthesis in συλλογισμός as the topic of *Analytica priora*.²⁸ Though Porphyry does seem to have eschewed any consideration of intermediaries in the nature of concepts between expressions and objects, at least insofar as he took the former to stand for (παραστήσαι) the latter in the first imposition,²⁹ he nonetheless makes it

clear that the theory of both first and second imposition of names is independent of the question of predication. To predicate is to ‘call something in accordance with something signified’.³⁰ A predicate expression does not then signify a thing directly, for predication would then be to call a thing in accordance with itself. In the case of Porphyry too, then, it becomes clear that *two* kinds of thing are signified by linguistic expressions, one in accordance with first imposition, another through predication.³¹

Regarding predication, the *Categories* had drawn a distinction as follows: ‘of things’ (τῶν ὄντων) ‘some are said of a subject, but are not in any subject’ (τὰ μὲν καθ’ ὑποκειμένου τινὸς λέγεται, ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ δὲ οὐδενί ἐστίν) and ‘others are in a subject but are not said of any subject’ (τὰ δὲ ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστίν, καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται).³² As an example of the latter, Aristotle gives ‘the individual white’ (τὸ τὶ λευκόν), which ‘is in a subject, the body’ (ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστίν τῷ σώματι) ‘for all colour is in a body’ (ἅπαν γὰρ χρῶμα ἐν σώματι), ‘but is not said of any subject’ (καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται).³³ ‘White’ (τὸ λευκόν), we further learn, because it is ‘what is in something, not as a part, and cannot exist separately from what it is in’ (ὃ ἐν τινι μὴ ὡς μέρος ὑπάρχον ἀδύνατον χωρὶς εἶναι τοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἐστίν), is a ‘qualification’ (ποιόν).³⁴

In specifying the subject of the *Categories* Porphyry’s account had been explicit in distinguishing such individuals as ‘white’ and their corresponding verbal expressions – which are ‘practically infinite in number’ (ἄπειρα μὲν σχεδὸν καὶ τὰ πράγματα καὶ αἱ λέξεις κατὰ ἀριθμόν). Nevertheless, ‘the list of ten genera under which the infinity of beings and expressions that signify them are found to be included’ (ἡ ἀπειρία τῶν ὄντων καὶ τῶν σημαινουσῶν αὐτὰ λέξεων εἰς δέκα γένη εὔρηται περιλαμβανομένη εἰς τὸ γράφεσθαι) comprehends both subjects and their qualifications *and* what is said of them.

εἰς δέκα τοίνυν γενικὰς διαφορὰς περιληφθέντων τῶν ὄντων δέκα καὶ αἱ δηλοῦσαι ταῦτα φωναὶ γέγονασι κατὰ γένη καὶ αὐταὶ περιληφθεῖσαι. δέκα οὖν λέγονται κατηγορίαι τῷ γένει δηλονότι, ὥσπερ καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ ὄντα δέκα τῷ γένει.³⁵

Since beings are comprehended by ten generic differentiae, the words that indicate them have also come to be ten in genus, and are themselves also so classified. Thus predications are said to be ten in genus, just as beings themselves are ten in genus.³⁶

By virtue of the correspondence of the ten genera of being and the ten genera of predication, for Porphyry, Aristotle is justified in naming the work *Categories* insofar as he is concerned with simple expressions directly significant of things ‘according to each genus’ (κατὰ γένος ἕκαστον).

ὥστε πᾶσα ἀπλὴ λέξις σημαντικὴ ὅταν κατὰ τοῦ σημαινομένου πράγματος ἀγορευθῇ τε καὶ λεχθῇ, λέγεται κατηγορία. οἷον ὄντος πράγματος τοῦδε τοῦ δεικνυμένου λίθου, οὐκ ἀπτόμεθα ἢ ὃ βλέπομεν, ὅταν εἰπώμεν ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ ὅτι

τόδε λίθος ἐστίν, ἡ λίθος λέξις κατηγορημά ἐστι· σημαίνει γὰρ τὸ τοιόνδε πρᾶγμα καὶ ἀγορεύεται κατὰ τοῦ δεικνυμένου πράγματος λίθου.³⁷

Hence whenever a simple significant expression is employed and said of what it signifies, this is called a predication. For example, this stone I am pointing at, which we can touch and see, is a thing, and when we say about it, ‘This is a stone’, the expression ‘stone’ is a predicate, for it signifies that sort of thing, and is uttered about the thing we are pointing at, the stone.³⁸

That is, a predicate expression is described as *applying* to the object indicated and *signifying* the kind of thing it is.³⁹ Having identified the former (i.e. the indicated object) as an ‘individual’ (τόδε τι), which is ‘particular’ (καθ’ ἕκαστον) in continuity with the Aristotelian account, the latter (i.e. the kind of thing signified) is ‘the thing in common for thought’ (τὸ κοινῇ τῇ διανοίᾳ) – i.e. a universal. The point is not only to distinguish universals from particulars, but also to qualify the relation involved as explicitly a relation *in thought*. In the case of predication, then, in addition to the terminology of individuals and particulars, the explicit relation in thought indicates the presence of a conceptual component to semantics.

παρὰ γὰρ τὰ καθ’ ἕκαστον οὔτε βοῦν οὔτε ἄνθρωπον οὔτε ἵππον οὔτε ὅλως ἐστι νοῆσαι ζῶον. εἰ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστον αἰσθήσεως ἐπὶ τὸ κοινῇ τῇ διανοίᾳ ἀφικνούμεθα, ὅπερ οὐκέτι τόδε τι νοοῦμεν ἀλλὰ τοιόνδε, εἰ τὰ καθ’ ἕκαστον ἀναιρεθῇ ζῶα, οὐκέτι οὐδὲ τὸ κοινῇ κατηγορούμενον κατ’ αὐτῶν ἔσται.⁴⁰

For it is not possible to think of an ox or horse or man in general apart from the particulars. But if it is from the perception of particulars that we come to conceive of *that which is in common for thought*, which we no longer think of as a ‘this’, but as a ‘such’, then if the particular animals are eliminated, what is predicated in common of them will no longer exist either.⁴¹

Now we are in position to reconcile the apparent discontinuity of an account of direct signification of things through simple expressions and the account of predication. The first-imposition relation between expressions and things qualified as a second-imposition relation in thought is, as such, the relation between significant expressions and the ten genera of *things of such a kind*. First-imposition signifiers signify particulars by directly naming them; predicative signifiers directly signify universals (i.e. what is common in thought).

This is not to say, however, that Porphyry envisaged two ways to signify particulars: one directly through the first imposition and the other indirectly through predication. On the contrary, insofar as a predicative statement is composed of a syntactic subject (ὄνομα) and a syntactic predicate (ῥῆμα), it is predicative *statements* that make use of two types of signification. In the case of the subject we have direct signification of the particular of which the predication is made by naming it and in the case of the predicate we have directly signified universals predicable of those particulars. In other words, the notion of

semantics as exclusively constrained by the theory of the first imposition of names not only presupposes that the semantic role that is attributable to concepts is confined to mediating the naming relation, but also that meaning as such is univalent. Neither constraint appears to be supported by the text. What we have instead is an account of signification sensitive to the variety of roles played by linguistic expressions and to the variety of their respective relations to the objects or states of affairs of which they speak.

For that reason, though I describe the controversy over the *σκοπός* of the *Categories* as the primary occasion for the Neoplatonic commentators' interest in semantics, it ought to be emphasized that Neoplatonic interest in (and theorization of) semantics is by no means confined to just those relations that may be thought to be directly relevant to the *σκοπός* question alone. Nonetheless, the question of how precisely the bipartite account as presented by Porphyry and the tripartite account as presented by, for example, Iamblichus can be reconciled in a unified account remains unanswered. Moreover, the further question of how precisely particulars directly signified in the first imposition of names are related to the universals under which they fall and which are directly signified in predication is taken up by Iamblichus as reported by Simplicius.

ὁ μέντοι Ἰάμβλιχος – οὐ τὰ γένη, φησίν, τῶν ὑποκειμένων κατηγορεῖται, ἀλλ' ἕτερα διὰ ταῦτα· ὅταν γὰρ λέγωμεν Σωκράτην ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, οὐ τὸν γενικόν φάμεν αὐτὸν ἄνθρωπον εἶναι, ἀλλὰ μετέχειν τοῦ γενικοῦ, ὥσπερ τὸ λευκὴν εἶναι τὴν ἄμπελον ταύτὸν ἐστὶν τῷ λευκοῦς βότρυας φέρειν, κατὰ ἀναφορὰν τὴν ἐπὶ τὸν καρπὸν οὕτως αὐτῆς καλουμένης. περὶ δὲ τούτων ἐν τοῖς Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ ἀκριβῶς διώρισεν Ἀριστοτέλης. νῦν δὲ κοινότερον κέχρηται ταῖς σημασίαις, ὥς καὶ ἡμεῖς ὅταν λέγωμεν τοὺς ὀρισμοὺς ἐκ γένους εἶναι καὶ διαφορῶν, οὐ κυρίως τὸ γένος ἐνταῦθα λαμβάνοντες, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τῆς πτώσεως, ἧς ἐξηγητικὸν ἐστὶν τὸ μετέχειν τοῦ γενικοῦ.⁴²

Iamblichus, however, says it is not genera that are predicated of what subsists, but other things by means of these; for when we say that Socrates is a man [we say] not that man is the generic, but that he participates in the generic, just as the vine's being white is identical to its bearing white grapes, by the anaphora of its being so called on the fruit. Aristotle precisely distinguished these things in the *Metaphysics*. Now we use the same signifiers in common as when we say that definitions are by genus and differentiae, understanding by this not primarily genus, but case instead, which is to be explained as participation in the generic.

Here we not only have the familiar Aristotelian distinction between 'the [whiteness] on the fruit' (τὴν [λευκὴν] ἐπὶ τὸν καρπὸν) and 'being white' (τὸ λευκὴν εἶναι), but also a specification of the relation between the two. The former is a particular, the latter is the particular's participation in a universal. Furthermore, the relation of participation in the generic (μετέχειν τοῦ γενικοῦ) is, in a primary sense, the relation of 'case' (πτώσεως), not genus, because definition by genus and differentiae would otherwise define the very thing in

accordance with which it defines. That is, the same problems that arise in an account of *predication* as signifying a thing directly applies to *definition* by genus and differentiae, namely circularity in the case of true definition and the consequent impossibility of false definition.

Attributing further reflection on ‘cases’ (πτώσεις) to unspecified ‘members of the Academy’ (οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας) – evidently Platonists, given the contrast with ‘members of the Stoa’ (οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς)⁴³ – Simplicius clarifies their relation to both particulars and universals.

ἐκάλουν δὲ τὴν ποιότητα καὶ ἔξιν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς, οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔχεσθαι τὰς ἔξεις ἐκτὰ ἐκάλουν, ὥσπερ τὰ ἐννοήματα μεθεκτὰ ἀπὸ τοῦ μετέχεσθαι καὶ τὰς πτώσεις τευκτὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ τυγχάνεσθαι καὶ κατηγορήματα καὶ συμβάματα ἀπὸ τοῦ συμβεβηκέναι.⁴⁴

Those from the Stoa also called the quality a property, but those from the Academy called properties ‘possessables’ by reason of being possessed, and concepts ‘participables’ by reason of being participated in, and the cases ‘pertainables’ by reason of pertaining to a class, and predicates ‘complements’ too by reason of complementing (the subject).

So predicates are neither particular properties nor dispositions, which are ‘things to possess’ (ἐκτά), nor universal concepts, which are ‘things to participate in’ (μεθεκτά). But nor are predicates the cases themselves, which are ‘things to have’ (τευκτά) – i.e. what particulars have as a result of participating in universals. Rather they are ‘accidents’ (συμβάματα) by virtue of ‘following upon’ (συμβεβηκέναι) the former through their participation in the latter and thereby *falling* under predicable concepts.

Porphyry’s theory of the first imposition of names, according to which the phenomena of nature are parastatically⁴⁵ or representatively signified by the direct application of names, defines the intelligibility of linguistic terms prerequisite for predication. In reception of Aristotle’s *Categories* a second type of signification is described by Porphyry, conceptually mediated in predication. A linguistic expression (φωνῇ or λέξις) is composed of a noun (ὄνομα) and a verb or an adjective (ῥῆμα). In representative signification the object is to identify features of the phenomenal world in order to establish the terms used in predication as meaningful at all. Such an expression directly signifies a factual condition (πρᾶγμα) composed of a particular individual (τόδε τι) and property (ποιόν), which is an attribute (ἐκτον). The expression is further classified by genus in the form of a predicative statement (κατηγορήμα) indicating the universal (τὸ καθόλου), which is an incident (μεθεκτόν). Insofar as a predicate is thereby predicable of a particular, it is an accident (σύμβαμα), and what we indicate by means of a predicate is that by falling under a universal the particular has a case (πτῶσις), which is a resultant (τευκτόν). In predicative signification the object is to make a statement about features of the phenomenal world by virtue of terms established as meaningfully identifiable as the objects they are through the first imposition of names.

The first type of signification signifies particulars and their composition in factual conditions. It is a bipartite theory according to which words directly signify things without the mediation of concepts. In this the *representative* semantic relation contrasts with the *conceptual* semantic relation of the second type of signification. The latter is a tripartite theory, whereby words directly signify concepts and thereby, indirectly things. In the version of the theory as developed by Iamblichus via Simplicius, the relationship between linguistic expressions and what they signify is given greater precision. According to this version, words (*φωναί*) signify neither common concepts (*νοήματα*), nor particular things (*πράγματα*), but particular things insofar as they fall under common concepts. Insofar as particular things fall under common concepts they are specified as cases (*πτώσεις*) and resultants (*τευκτά*). Far from being mutually exclusive, the tripartite theory is dependent on the bipartite theory for the meaningfulness of the terms predicated. The meaningfulness of terms used in predication is indefeasible, whereas predications are verifiable or falsifiable by reference to the sensible world, but indefeasible by reference to the thoughts which they express.

Type one directly signifies things; type two directly signifies thoughts. It is in this sense that type one provides a natural account of meaning and type two, a logical account of meaning. The distinction has thoroughgoing consequences for subsequent Neoplatonic developments, especially after Iamblichus, for the several possibilities it preserves in explanation of language-thought-world relations, in particular the possibility of utilizing direct language-world in parallel with conceptual signifying relations and ultimately the methodological option of mapping the elements of the one onto those of the other. More immediately, however, it provides an explanatory underpinning not only to the conceptual relation adumbrated in the section on how speech is signified hieroglyphically in the previous section, but also to how a causal connection between such linguistic signs and the natural phenomena to which they refer can be theorized. It is this dual interpretative framework that is the subject of Chapter 3.

Notes

- 1 Cf. Shisha-Halevy, A., *Coptic Grammatical Chrestomathy: A Course for Academic and Private Study* (Analecta Orientalia 30) (Leuven: Peeters, 1988): pp. xiii–xiv.
- 2 In common with many Hebrew and Arabic texts, Egyptian writing is *unpointed* (i.e. lacks marked vowels).
- 3 Gardiner sign-inventory references: N35 M3 Aa1 X1 D40.
- 4 The standard uses of the terms ‘transliteration’ and ‘transcription’ as applied to Egyptian hieroglyphic or, for example, Akkadian cuneiform texts, are such that ‘transliteration’ usually means non-reversible orthographic representation and ‘transcription’, specifically phonetic representation. In the present case, by contrast ‘transliteration’ simply means reversible (or lossless) transliteration.
- 5 Cf. Barnes, J., ‘Meaning, Saying, Thinking’ in Döring, K. and Ebert, Th. (eds.), *Dialektiker und Stoiker: zur Logik der Stoa und ihrer Vorläufer* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1993): pp. 47–61.
- 6 I specify ‘first-order’ because, as I will show, considerable second-order analysis is required (and some second-order detail is explicitly provided).

- 7 See e.g. Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica*: αἰνιττόμενοι (1.2, 59); νομίζοντες καὶ μηνύοντες (1.61); ἐμφαίνουσιν (1.42); σκιάζουσι (1.70).
- 8 Cf. Ammonius, *In Aristotelis librum de interpretatione commentarius* 48.31: περὶ δὲ τοῦ δύο μόνα εἶδη τῶν σημαντικῶν εἶναι φωνῶν, ὄνομα καὶ ῥῆμα, τὸ μὲν ὑπάρξεων δηλωτικόν, τὸ δὲ ἐνεργειῶν ἢ παθῶν, ὥς κοινῶς ὠνόμασε πράξεις.
- 9 See Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): pp. xlvii–xlvi.
- 10 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.1.
- 11 Sbordone, F., (ed.), *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Naples: Georg Olms, 2002 [2nd edn]); Van de Walle, B. and Vergote, J., (trans.), ‘Traduction des Hieroglyphica d’Horapollon’ in *Chronique d’Égypte*, Vol. 18 (1943): pp. 39–89, 199–239; addenda *ibid.*, Vol. 22 (1947): pp. 251–259.
- 12 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.19–20, 49–50, 70.
- 13 Zoologically, a sign symptomatic of a range of social, dietary, and environmental sources of distress and discomfort; hieroglyphically, a sign of ‘impurity’ (ἀκαθαρσία).
- 14 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.15, 66.
- 15 On the non-semantic aspects of which cf. *nam et oculi nimis arguti, quemadmodum animo affecti simus, loquuntur* (Cicero, *de Legibus* 1.27); *neque ulla ex parte (quam ex oculis) maiora animi indicia . . . homini maxime . . . profecto in oculis animus habitat . . . oculi ceu vasa quaedam visibilem eius partem accipiunt atque tramittunt* (Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 11.145–6).
- 16 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.27.1–8.
- 17 They could also perhaps signify objects *and* concepts, depending on whether one takes a Russellian or a Fregean view of the meanings of singular terms (i.e. a proper name, demonstrative pronouns, or demonstrative adjective plus common noun phrase). Neither variation of the tripartite theory is necessarily mutually exclusive with the bipartite, since the former can be argued to be dependent on the latter for the meaningfulness of the terms, verifiable or falsifiable by reference to the sensible world, used in predicative statements.
- 18 Iamblichus at Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 19.36–20.12.
- 19 Cf. Joannes Philoponus, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 13.1.9.12–5; cf. Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 21.3–39; Elias, Eliae (olim Davidis) *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 129.19–131.33.
- 20 See esp. Griffin, M. J., ‘The Reception of Aristotle’s Categories, c. 80 BC to AD 220’ (Thesis submitted for the DPhil.: Oriel College, Oxford, 2009). See also Strange, S. K., ‘Plotinus, Porphyry, and the Neoplatonic Interpretation of the “Categories”’ in Haase, W., (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt (ANRW)*, Band II, 36.2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987): pp. 955–974.
- 21 Aristotle, *De interpretatione* 16a1 ff.: ‘στι μὲν οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ φωνῇ τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων σύμβολα, καὶ τὰ γραφόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ φωνῇ. καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί· ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρώτων, ταῦτα πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα πράγματα ἤδη ταῦτά.
- 22 Attributed to Herminius at Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.59.20–25 and Porphyry himself at Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.17.3 ff.
- 23 Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.209.10–14.
- 24 Cf. Griffin (2009) and Lloyd, A. C., *The Anatomy of Neoplatonism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990): pp. 36–75.
- 25 Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.57.20–29.
- 26 Strange, Steven K., *Porphyry: On Aristotle Categories* (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle) (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1992): p. 33.
- 27 Ammonius, *In Aristotelis librum de interpretatione commentarius* 17.20–28. The terminology of imposition itself was known in the Stoa; cf. Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 6.8.8.2–3.
- 28 Ammonius, *In Aristotelis librum de interpretatione commentarius* 4.5–10.

- 29 ἡ πρόθεσις τοῦ βιβλίου περὶ τῆς πρώτης θέσεως τῶν λέξεων τῆς παραστατικῆς τῶν πραγμάτων· ἔστιν γὰρ περὶ φωνῶν σημαντικῶν ἀπλῶν, καθὸ σημαντικαί εἰσι τῶν πραγμάτων (4.1.58.4–6). See also Lloyd, A. C., *The Anatomy of Neoplatonism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990): Cap. 2, ‘Porphyrian Semantics’.
- 30 τὸ δὲ ἀγορεύειν τὰ πράγματα κατὰ τι σημαίνονμενον κατηγορεῖν ἔλεγον (4.1.58.16–17).
- 31 Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.56.8–13.
- 32 Aristotle, *Categoriae* 1a20–24.
- 33 καὶ τὸ τὶ λευκὸν ἐν ὑποκειμένῳ μὲν ἐστὶ τῷ σώματι, – ἅπαν γὰρ χρῶμα ἐν σώματι, – καθ’ ὑποκειμένου δὲ οὐδενὸς λέγεται· (1a27–29).
- 34 οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο σημαίνει τὸ λευκὸν ἀλλ’ ἢ ποιόν (3b19).
- 35 Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.58.9–20.
- 36 Strange (1992): p. 34.
- 37 Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.56.8–13.
- 38 Strange (1992): p. 31.
- 39 σημαίνει γὰρ τὸ τοιόνδε πρᾶγμα καὶ ἀγορεύεται κατὰ τοῦ δεικνυμένου πράγματος λίθου (56.12–13).
- 40 Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.91.1–5.
- 41 Strange (1992): p. 81 (substituting ‘that which is in common for thought’ for ‘the common predicate’).
- 42 Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.53.9–18.
- 43 Cf. Frede, M., ‘The Stoic Notion of a *Lekton*’ in Everson, S., (ed.), *Companions to Ancient Thought: 3 Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 109–128.
- 44 Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.209.10–14.
- 45 This is a Porphyrian term. See *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.57.20–29 and 4.1.58.4–6.

3 Natural signs

The single most striking difficulty for contemporary readers of Horapollo's text is that the standards of correctness to which the explanations of the meaning of the glyphs might be supposed to have adhered appears to have been irredeemably lost, at least to Egyptologists subsequent to the publication of Champollion's system. Even allowing for the dilution of core material that can be considered Egyptologically accurate (perhaps through the editorial activity of Philip, especially in Book Two) there has remained, post-decipherment, a widespread sense that the 'allegorizing' explanations contained in the *Hieroglyphica* must be abandoned. More than that: even where Horapollo had correctly understood the original Egyptian meanings of hieroglyphs, the proper way to explain how they come to mean what they do is also understood to be the province of philologists, not allegorists.

Notwithstanding this difficulty, the aim of this chapter is to establish the *Hieroglyphica* as a proper topic for systematic investigation because it is methodologically principled in its explanatory strategies. Starting from the observation that Horapollo's explanations variously appeal to the referents, causes, and functions of the items depicted by hieroglyphs, as well as formal similarities, relational analogies, and shared attributes alluded to between the glyphs and the phenomena signified, further distinguishable senses of what it is for something to be an 'explanation of meaning' are identifiable.

Even if the method of the *Hieroglyphica* can in principle be salvaged in this way, one feature likely still to provoke concern for modern readers in the apparent *implausibility* of many of the explanations Horapollo provides for the meanings he assigns to the hieroglyphs described. Amongst readers who conceive of the semantic relation as one in which the meaning of a glyph is explained by the truth-conditions of propositions about the features of the world supposed to be depicted by it, this concern might be abated by reflecting on the state of empirical research at the time the text was composed, at least to the extent of forgiving the perceived error if not actually according it credence. If we have discovered, for example, that lions do not in fact sleep with their eyes open, then perhaps we should concede that a hieroglyphic sign depicting a lion cannot after all signify vigilance.

In this and remaining chapters, therefore, I develop an understanding of the various senses in which Horapollo's hieroglyphs might express their meanings in ways that are inaccessible to scripts that do not depict (or at least rate are no longer understood to depict) *realia*. The Graeco-Roman tradition did acknowledge a mode of hieroglyphic expression in the sense in which Greek, for example, also expresses meaning, that is by virtue of its capacity to render the phonetic properties of the language.¹ The emphasis, however, has always remained firmly on the 'pictographic' possibilities of hieroglyphic script (in an extended and, for that reason, contested sense). The issue is a vexed one, so the focus in the sections immediately following will be exclusively on distinguishing a notion of *natural signs* as opposed to the *linguistic signs* explored in the previous chapter. The aim is to develop the possibility of signification by means of inferential relations between formal properties of glyphs and the natural phenomena they depict.

3.1 The Graeco-Roman reception of the tradition

It is clear that the *Hieroglyphica* owes its survival in the modern period to Renaissance antiquarians imperfectly acquainted with the details of the antiquity of the tradition to which it belonged. Horapollo himself had been similarly imperfectly acquainted with the language of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. Consequently, the perceived failings of both the former and the latter have been exhaustively enumerated in the course of the two centuries subsequent to Champollion's decipherment.

As we have seen, the primary interest of the philological criticism, which has focussed on the tradition's apparent congruence or otherwise with the success of the decipherment endeavour, was the reconstruction of the language of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. From an independent interest in that reconstructive venture, a distinction between sound-signs and sense-signs was introduced which nonetheless does not support an analysis of hieroglyphic texts out of a purely orthographic concern. The spelling of inscriptional sign-groups are lexically specific and cannot be systematically aligned with a primary distinction between ideographic and phonetic signs.

In addition, then, to reflection on recent theoretical models of hieroglyphic Egyptian we need also to consider two groups of Graeco-Roman evidence contemporary with the classical tradition. First, linguistic artefacts and the classical tradition of *αἰγυπτιακά* and histories of Egypt. Second, the lexicographical bilingual glossaries – *hermeneiai*, *hermeneumata*, etc. – and the broader ancient philological and exegetical tradition. Together these represent the second of the two major traditions within which Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* has historically been read.

The linguistic artefacts – like the Rosetta stone, the Flaminian obelisk of Augustus, the obelisk of Constantius in the Circus Maximus, the Isiac table² – as belonging amongst the 'Greek, Hebrew or Latin translations of hieroglyphic

texts³ of which Champollion made use, are not, despite the apparently crucial role they play in the pre-19th century studies, of primary interest here,⁴ except insofar as both Egyptian and Graeco-Roman monumental and literary material can be shown to *exemplify* principles identified in the classical analyses. The extensive classical tradition of histories of Egypt and *αἰγυπτιακά*, however, provide a well-developed thematic framework according to which hieroglyphic material was received. Though beginning with Hecataeus of Miletus (550–476 B.C.), the first major historical source is the second book of Herodotus (484–430/425 B.C.), who establishes several of the major glyphic themes of subsequent accounts: flora and fauna, monumental architecture, cultic activity etc.⁵ Hellanicus of Lesbos (fl. 5th cent. B.C.), Eudoxus of Cnidus (410/408–355/347 B.C.), Lysimachus (360–281 B.C.), Hecataeus of Abdera (fl. 4th cent. B.C.), and Manethon of Sebennyptos (fl. 305–285 B.C.) are fragmentary, though elements of this early tradition are in part preserved in the first book of Diodorus Siculus (80–20 B.C.).

The *Αἰγυπτιακά* of Manethon ought perhaps to be mentioned in particular, insofar as the chronology it contains provided evidence used by Champollion in the decipherment of the royal cartouches. Subsequently there are the works of Apollonius Molon (fl. c.70 B.C.), Strabo (64 B.C.–22 A.D.), Apion (fl. 1st cent. A.D.), Flavius Josephus (fl. c.70 A.D.), and the Roman historians: Gaius Cornelius Tacitus (56–117 A.D.) and Ammianus Marcellinus (325–391 A.D.). Despite, however, rather full accounts of several recurring Egyptian themes in the aforementioned, only Herodotus and Ammianus provide any substantial information on hieroglyphic Egyptian beyond noting the appearance of the two scripts identifiable.

The evidence for knowledge of Egyptian spoken language (*φωνή*) and written language (*γράμματα*) respectively, as either attributed to (e.g. Pythagoras in Iamblichus) or evidenced by (e.g. Hermapion in Ammianus) classical authors, implies a more sophisticated and detailed knowledge of the language than is generally acknowledged. Pythagoras had been credited with knowledge of Egyptian,⁶ and specifically Egyptian *φωνή*,⁷ but for particulars concerning the spoken language Herodotus and Plutarch are two of the fuller sources. Typically any material provided concerning the phonetic properties of Egyptian words is confined to proper and common nouns, of which a dozen or so examples can be found in Herodotus, and a further two dozen in Plutarch.⁸

By the time the first references to Egypt appear in classical sources, Egypt itself had been subject to multiple periods of non-native control (Libyan, Assyrian, Persian). That this was the case may have influenced the Greek debate about the relative priority of the Egyptians and the Ethiopians, particularly in connection with the origins of writing. The debate as to the precise antiquity and historical circumstances under which writing was invented acknowledged several competing sources: Assyrian, Egyptian, Syrian, Phoenician, and Babylonian.⁹ The passage from Diodorus Siculus cited earlier is of particular interest in this context because not only does he attribute both the origins of letters and also of language itself to Hermes without offering competing accounts, but he

also employs a very particular (though by no means unique) device for fixing the attribution: the etymology of the name ‘Hermes’ in his teaching the Greeks the interpretation (ἐρμηνεία) of their thoughts.

From the earliest classical discussions a basic distinction in written Egyptian is observed between ‘sacred letters’ (γράμματα ἱερά) and ‘demotic’ (δημοτικά), that is, ‘two types of letters, both those called sacred and those with the commoner learning’ (γράμματα διπτά, τὰ τε ἱερά καλούμενα καὶ τὰ κοινοτέραν ἔχοντα τὴν μάθησιν).¹⁰ Greek interest in the written language is almost exclusively focussed on the former, as, for example, in Plutarch: ‘out of sacred letters’ (ἐκ τῶν ἱερῶν γραμμάτων) and ‘of the letters called hieroglyphic’ (τῶν γὰρ καλουμένων ἱερογλυφικῶν γραμμάτων).¹¹ If demotic script is little emphasized, however, according to Champollion,¹² both hieroglyphic Egyptian (whether carved or painted) and hieratic Egyptian are to be understood as the γράμματα ἱερά of classical sources.

Classical (and in particular Greek) sources of evidence for theoretical and explanatory knowledge of hieroglyphs and their meanings are neither so abundant as to have ensured since Champollion (1822) their preservation from comparative neglect, nor so scarce as to explain the sparse attention they have received in modern classical scholarship. Several studies have been made that were intended to establish the relative success or failure of classical accounts of written Egyptian to correspond with the principles and findings of modern Egyptology. Reading, with few exceptions, modern appraisals of their value, one might never suspect the significance of studies of hieroglyphic Egyptian made in the classical sources.¹³ Nonetheless, though in general the verdict has not been favourable,¹⁴ Deiber (1904),¹⁵ Vergote (1939),¹⁶ and Sbordone (2002),¹⁷ for example, have established that various passages do contain a core of substantially well-informed observations on genuinely Egyptian linguistic material.

More importantly for present purposes, however, is the fact that it is in the context of these overtly explanatory resources in the classical tradition that the issue of the genre of the endeavour in which the hieroglyphic tradition was engaged arises and is articulated in terms of its dual – linguistic and natural – semiotic function.

3.2 Genre: lexicon or encyclopaedia?

How did the lexicographical background of the classical tradition into which it was received conceive of ancient Egyptian linguistic practice? At least insofar as it informed the collation and explanation of hieroglyphs the answer is ‘variously’.

Based on an analysis of the (typically erratic) arrangement of word-lists such as the *Ramesseum Onomasticon* and the *Onomasticon of Amenope* by category (‘birds, animals, cereals, parts of an ox, geographical names, and the like’)¹⁸ Gardiner draws the conclusion that these texts represent the ‘first steps in the direction of an Encyclopaedia’.¹⁹ Reporting this conclusion, Fox acknowledges that the Egyptian word-lists are often so arranged, but sees no reason to attribute

this fact to a desire on the part of the authors to reflect categorical hierarchies in the phenomena of nature. Though in certain cases the forms of hieroglyphs are in fact related semantically to the items they depict, a much more likely motivation, Fox argues, is that the *onomastica* were used to teach the writing of hieroglyphs.²⁰ This would help explain the inclusion of orthographic variants in these texts, and separate entries for synonymous expressions. (As Fox points out, such considerations cannot apply to comparable texts in either Hebrew or Greek where orthographical considerations necessitate completely different kinds of pedagogical provision.) Interest in the *realia* depicted in such lists is a comparatively late phenomenon, typically found in demotic rather than in hieroglyphic sources.²¹ Even here, though the lists are organized by individual sign rather than words in which they commonly appear, a primary focus on orthography is still likely since the texts do not share common organizational themes.

Amongst lexicographical texts a number of forms are possible. It is the glossary, for example, that provides explanations of abstruse, technical, dialectal, or foreign terms (in Egyptian samples often with bilingual equivalents in Greek or Latin). Kramer,²² furthermore, distinguishes two main types of ancient glossary: *Gebrauchsglossare* and *Schulglossare*. The former were intended as popular handbooks and for daily use. The latter belonged to the scholarly tradition of lexicography. Within the second group there subsequently developed a further distinction between more complex lexicographical forms such as the *Idiomata* and *Hermeneumata*. The first ‘always regarded Greek as the norm, [and] listed grammatical differences between the two languages’, whereas the second ‘had a primarily lexical interest and contained lists of words (such as no. 5 in K.’s collection) and short texts with a literal translation’.²³

Developments towards the provision of explanatory information beyond simple lexical glosses, including semantic, grammatical, or etymological, as well as factual material, represent intermediate cases between the simple glossaries of lexicography proper and the broader philological and exegetical tradition. Sluiter²⁴ identifies lexicographical texts of this type as belonging to one of several groups of Greek texts constituting the class of secondary literature:

lexica, paraphrases, the so-called “*περί*-literature” (“on” specific topics in ancient authors), *ἐπιμερισμοί* (exhaustive, word-for-word discussions), scholia, *ζητήματα/ἀπορήματα/προβλήματα*-literature with or without *léseiš* [*sic*] (that is, the identification of critical problems in ancient texts, sometimes with “solutions”), *Ἄπιτομαί* [*sic*], and commentaries (conventionally distinguished by the explicit presence of *lômmata* [*sic*] sections of the source-text that are then being explained).²⁵

Moreover, there is a problematic aspect to the assignment of *genre* to a study at least partly belonging to a discipline responsible for assigning *genre* (philology) compounded not only by the apparently dual generic affiliation of the text, but also by the fact that it is not at all clear that secondary literature as such

enjoyed a recognized status as a separate *genre* or range of *genres* within ancient classifications of literary form. Isocrates distinguishes as many prose as poetic *τρόποι* or *ἰδέαι*, but does not identify a category relevant in this context. Six prose genres were recognized by Callimachus (c. 3rd B.C.) in his *Πίνακες*,²⁶ including history, oratory, philosophy, and law. A reference in the full title of this work to *paideia* quite generally may indicate the possibility that grammarians (philologists) might be subsumed under the *πίναξ τῶν παντοδαπῶν*. Though later works tend to show greater interest in the subject,²⁷ on the question of the specific sub-genre to which we ought to assign the *Hieroglyphica*, the text is, however, both explicit and technically precise.

The exegetical themes employed in the interpretation of the hieroglyphic signary by Horapollo are therefore not merely legitimated by virtue of their Egyptian provenance, but in the context of Alexandrian hieroglyphic semiotics, are methodologically justified too. Therefore, even if, as a result of limited evidence for contemporary eidography on secondary forms of literature, difficulties present themselves concerning the possibility of classifying the *Hieroglyphica* as belonging to a specific *genre*, then still it is possible clearly to identify features of the text more overtly relevant to determining how one should (or indeed how its original readers did) go about reading it. In other words, situating the *Hieroglyphica* in particular lines of historical or generic development entails the imposition of certain artificial limits on the range of historical materials to which the *genre* may be thought applicable, or generic uses to which the material may be put. This results in the failure to recognize the significance of the text's apparently mixed provenance, which is not as incongruous as it seems, but in fact signals several distinguishable purposes and associated methodologies, in this case: *the interpretation of hieroglyphic signs by means of natural signs*.

It is not that originally lexicographical or paradoxographical material have become mutually contaminated (a conclusion which requires the further hypothesis that the text is the product of a certain of historical development). Rather, the extension (*ὑπέταξα*)²⁸ which comprises Book Two of the *Hieroglyphica* of those resources that were utilized in Book One indicates the presence of an increasingly productive hermeneutic. The impact of this would not be felt, therefore, in the development of the methodologies proper to dictionaries and encyclopaedias (i.e. definition, translation, or classification), but in semiotically determined *genres*. Upon the issue of a series of printed editions of the text in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, it was to the tradition of *emblematics* as exemplified in Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica* and Alciato's *Emblemata* that the interpretative methodology of the *Hieroglyphica* thereafter made its extensive contribution.

For practical convenience one might begin a review of the relationship between the Greek hieroglyphic tradition and the Egyptian by considering the range of signs and (in this context) the range of objects they depict (whatever they may signify) according to Gardiner's sign-list. Here they are arranged in twenty-six categories (A to Aa, excluding J) each designating a group of related concepts: e.g. 'man and his occupations' (A); 'buildings, parts of buildings' (O);

and ‘strokes, signs derived from hieratic, geometrical figures’ (Z). We have seen that in the Greek tradition our first major historical source for the grouping of hieroglyphic signs into a broad classificatory scheme is the second book of Herodotus (484–430/425 B.C.), but similar groupings of hieroglyphic signs can be found in later sources too. Ammianus Marcellinus, for example, notes the vulture, bee, and ‘*volucrum ferarumque genera multa [. . .] et animalium species innumeras multas*’.²⁹ Other groupings also exist.³⁰ Ultimately, relevant material might include any natural objects or phenomena (divine names, sacred animals, theosophy, comets etc.) thought to be susceptible of being signified in some sense: natural signs, written signs of sounds, or hieroglyphic signs of natural objects.³¹

It seems clear, however, that the hieroglyphic categories found in the Greek sources are not arranged solely according to the orthographic constraints that influenced the Egyptian onomastica. For example, every hieroglyph identified by Clement of Alexandria not only has native Egyptian credentials, but also each of them is cited in two passages in the *Stromata* reflecting on the ‘symbolic’ style in philosophy and theology.³²

Nor are these the only references in the *Stromata* to the explanatory value of a semiology that brings hieroglyphic orthography into alignment with the pursuit of natural science or philosophy.³³ The model of the semiological curriculum (cosmology, moral virtues) has an instructive purpose, which, despite Clement’s assurance that this is how the Egyptians learn their letters³⁴ is not confined to instruction in *exclusively* Egyptian practice. More importantly, there is a sense in which the model is justified by the fact that the Egyptians pursue a philosophy of their own (μετίασι γὰρ οἰκείαν τινὰ φιλοσοφίαν Αἰγύπτιοι).³⁵

Clement catalogues the subjects covered by this philosophy in a catalogue of thirty-six out of forty-two books which he enumerates in accordance with the order of a certain ceremonial procession.³⁶ This catalogue of forty-two books comprises two books of music, four books of astrology, one *paedeutical* and one *moscophatic* book, ten books concerning Egyptian worship, six medical books, ten ‘hieratic’, and eight with which the sacred scribe must acquaint himself.³⁷ All but the six medical books are described as ‘containing the whole philosophy of the Egyptians’ (τὴν πᾶσαν Αἰγυπτίων περιεχούσας φιλοσοφίαν).³⁸ Of particular relevance among these books is one of the eight books assigned to the scribe in the procession, one of which concerns τὰ [τε] ἱερογλυφικὰ καλούμενα:

Ἐξῆς δὲ ὁ ἱερογραμματεὺς προέρχεται, ἔχων πτερὰ ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς βιβλίον τε ἐν χερσὶ καὶ κανοῦν, ἐν ᾧ τότε γραφικὸν μέλαν καὶ σχοῖνος ἢ γράφουσι. τοῦτον τὰ [τε] ἱερογλυφικὰ καλούμενα περί τε τῆς κοσμογραφίας καὶ γεωγραφίας [τῆς τάξεως τοῦ ἡλίου καὶ τῆς σελήνης καὶ περὶ τῶν πέντε πλανωμένων,] χωρογραφίας τε τῆς Αἰγύπτου καὶ τῆς τοῦ Νείλου διαγραφῆς περί τε τῆς [καταγραφῆς] <κατα>σκευῆς τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ τῶν ἀφιερωμένων αὐτοῖς χωρίων περί τε μέτρων ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς χρησίμων | εἰδέναι χρή.³⁹

Next in order the sacred scribe proceeds, with wings on his head, and a book and rule in his hands, in which were the ink for writing and the reed with which they write. And he must know what are called hieroglyphics,

and about cosmography and geography [the position of the sun and the moon, and about the five planets,] also the description of the land of Egypt, and the map of the Nile and about the list of the tools of the priests and of the spaces consecrated to them, and about measures and things useful in the sacred rites.

Clement is explicit then that hieroglyphics formed part of the *philosophy* of the Egyptians in a way that even the medical books do not (though the latter might have been expected to be included in a Greek context). In contrast to the earlier passage from Clement alluded to,⁴⁰ which is limited to a demonstration a detailed systematic knowledge of the script for Greek knowledge of hieroglyphic Egyptian, the significance of this later sequence extends as far as legitimizing the etymological and allegorical exegeses of hieroglyphs as they appear in the tradition. The questions raised by this distinction between exegesis as textual archaeology and exegesis as textual redeployment will be dealt with later, but even if in particular instances hieroglyphs were not used in the symbolic-allegorical manner among the Egyptians themselves, still the exegetical themes reflected genuinely hieroglyphic tradition.

It is in the *Stromata* that Clement is first to distinguish three scripts: *epistolographic*, *hieratic*, and *hieroglyphic*. Though the classificatory schema he describes is perhaps the most sophisticated in the classical sources, it is also notoriously brief and consequently highly contentious.⁴¹

Αὐτίκα οἱ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις παιδευόμενοι πρῶτον μὲν πάντων τὴν Αἰγυπτίων γραμμάτων μέθοδον ἐκμανθάνουσι, τὴν ἐπιστολογραφικὴν καλουμένην· δευτέραν δὲ τὴν ἱερατικὴν, ἣ χρῶνται οἱ ἱερογραμματεῖς· ὑστάτην δὲ καὶ τελευταίαν τὴν ἱερογλυφικὴν, ἥς ἡ μὲν ἐστὶ διὰ τῶν πρώτων στοιχείων κυριολογικὴ, ἡ δὲ συμβολικὴ. Τῆς δὲ συμβολικῆς ἡ μὲν κυριολογεῖται κατὰ μίμησιν, ἡ δ' ὥσπερ τροπικῶς γράφεται, ἡ δὲ ἀλληγορεῖται κατὰ τινὰς αἰνιγμούς.⁴²

Immediately among the Egyptians students first thoroughly learn the method of the Egyptian script known as the epistolographic. Second, the hieratic, which the sacred scribes use. And afterwards finally the hieroglyphic, of which the [method] is both the literal one by means of the first elements, and the symbolic. And of the symbolic one is literal imitatively, one writes as it were figuratively, and one allegorizes according to certain allusions.

The fundamental distinction he draws is between those hieroglyphs that signify 'by means of first elements' (διὰ τῶν πρώτων στοιχείων), i.e. literally or phonetically, and 'symbolic' (συμβολικὴ), i.e. pictographically in the broad sense. The latter subdivides into symbolic glyphs that signify pictographically in the narrow sense, figuratively, and allegorically. Both literal and pictographic (*sensu stricto*) glyphs are further described as signifying 'mimetically' (κατὰ μίμησιν) – mimetic, that is, of the phonetic elements of speech and of the items they

depict, respectively. In cases of tropic usage (*τροπικῶς*) glyphs operate through the formal or phonetic ‘affinity’ (*κατ’ οἰκεότητα*) of metaphor, metonymy, homonyms, homophones, and variant-forms in contrast with mimetic glyphs as direct representations of fundamental elements or depicted items. Finally, there are glyphs that ‘allegorize allusively’ (*ἀλληγορεῖται κατὰ τινος αἰνιγμοῦς*). Thus, the hieroglyph of a snake, for example, might be used in the first Clementian symbolic sense, mimetically, to mean precisely ‘snake’; in the second, tropically, by virtue of a *formal affinity*, to mean ‘sinuous’; and in a third ‘allegorical’ sense, by means of *comparison*, to mean ‘the sinuous course of the stars’. Similarly, the hieroglyph of a dung-beetle might mean, first, *Scarabæus sacer*; second, by virtue of a *phonetic affinity*, ‘become’ [in Egyptian, *hpr* and *hpr*, respectively⁴³]; or, third, what (according to Clement) they each have in common: a rolling, circular passage, a periodic generative capacity.⁴⁴

The point to be made here is two-fold. First, of course, the account Clement provides in fact maps rather well onto the standard Egyptological account in more ways than is typically conceded.⁴⁵ But second, the very point at which Clement’s and the Egyptological accounts part ways is itself clearly and formally articulated and theorized so as to preserve for hieroglyphic Egyptian not merely a philological interest, but a role as a repository of ancient natural and cosmological speculation.

Any general account of hieroglyphic Egyptian offering philological and historical evidence in support of the reading it offers quite properly engages in an inductive method of enquiry with a view to attaining a correct theoretical account of the full complexity of the rules of hieroglyphic orthography.⁴⁶ This, briefly put, is the familiar approach employed in the decipherment endeavour, for which *the recovery of the language of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs* is the principal objective. The sense (if not always the exact meaning) of the vast majority of extant hieroglyphic texts has been put beyond reasonable doubt following precisely this method, the principles of which are, for that reason, no longer in question. What is thought by the classical hieroglyphic tradition, however, to have been preserved in the specific context of the hieroglyphic signary and texts, is original, primitive, true, or ultimately perfect *Egyptian wisdom*. The idea is well-attested in the textual tradition of Egyptian wisdom literature itself,⁴⁷ though the range of its generality in the classical sources is significantly extended.

Where knowledge of the original circumstances of Egyptian hieroglyphic usage is in decline, and *the reception of the wisdom of ancient Egypt* is a dominant concern, the rules historically applied are of less importance than the range of the hieroglyphic signs themselves and the *possibilities* of their use as an exegetical resource.⁴⁸ Neither the approach via Egyptian linguistic practice, nor via later exegetical strategies, however, has satisfactorily clarified the philosophical context (concerning theories of the origins and function of language or of linguistic signification), for either conception. Nor has either provided such independent justification as might be thought necessary for the deployment

of these strategies in explanation of hieroglyphs or the particular suitability of hieroglyphs for the purposes to which they are put.

3.3 Natural and artefactual signs in Horapollo

One immediately attractive alternative to analysis of the meaning of hieroglyphs exclusively in terms of sense and reference, then, would be to argue that Horapollonian semantics is not about reference in the way discussed in Chapter 2 at all, but about inference – namely the inferences one can draw from empirical data as depicted by the formal features of hieroglyphs as to the meanings of those glyphs, whether or not the data itself happens to be true. This type of explanation infers via formal (or, at any rate, formalizable) argumentation from verifiable and falsifiable statements (provided, in the Horapollo's case, by natural-historical resources) about the phenomena of the sensible world (such as are depicted by hieroglyphs) to explanations as to why linguistic items bear the meanings they in fact do. In this way, the fact that certain hieroglyphs have known meanings legitimizes an increasingly productive hermeneutic (such as we arguably find in Book Two of the *Hieroglyphica*) for licensing inferences about the meaning of signs with previously unknown meanings.

This section therefore examines the members of the Horapollonian signary as mimetic of or directly depicting natural phenomena, unmediated either by (any) spoken language or other preconditions. The question here is how such a conception of the explanation of meaning bears upon the reception of the hieroglyphic wisdom the glyphs themselves are thought to offer.

The subjects of Egyptian theosophy (or better, *Egyptizing philosophy*), which included 'Egyptian animal worship, theology, iconography, symbolism and hieroglyphics',⁴⁹ had been subjects addressed in a broad Greek tradition of hieroglyphic exegesis. Several material and explanatory parallels exist between the *Hieroglyphica* of Chaeremon and Horapollo, fragmentary though the former is,⁵⁰ but it was not only in Alexandria (Chaeremon, Clement), but also in Chaeronia (Plutarch), Rome (Porphyry), and Apameia (Iamblichus) that the tradition developed.⁵¹

οἱ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις φιλοσοφήμασι τὸν Ἰσίδωρον σύνεργον καὶ συγκυνηγέτην παρελάμβανον τῆς ἐν βυθῷ κεκρυμμένης ὡς ἀληθῶς ἱερᾶς ἀληθείας.⁵²

Even in the Egyptian philosophical subjects they [i.e. Heraiscus and Asclepiades] associated with Isidore as a colleague and fellow-seeker of the truly sacred truth hidden in the depths.

It is with this emphasis on hieroglyphics as belonging amongst 'the Egyptian philosophical subjects' (τὰ Αἰγύπτια φιλοσοφήματα) in late Platonism that the dual attribution to Horapollo of the titles γραμματικός and φιλόσοφος develops a significance that extends beyond the *explanatory* content and structure of the

Hieroglyphica. It is, therefore, in light of a further plausible *philosophical* context for the composition of the *Hieroglyphica* that the following sections are intended to address the question of the extent to which Horapollo's text exemplifies, or otherwise elucidates two main concerns, one semiological, the other theological.

I begin, then, by elaborating on the nature of the relationship between natural signs and the hieroglyphs in explanation of which they are cited. In a general sense the relationship is perfectly clear. The Horapollonian index of signs is *eo ipso* an index of these natural items because hieroglyphs *depict* natural items ('natural' as opposed to 'linguistic', including, for these purposes, cultural artefacts, numerals, etc.). None of the examples provided by the text, however, are directly *pictographic* of their meaning. In the following text, for example, had the glyph of a lioness meant 'lioness', no further explanation of the meaning of the glyph would have been necessary.

[Πῶς γυναῖκα γεννήσασαν ἅπαξ]. Γυναῖκα γεννήσασαν ἅπαξ βουλόμενοι σημῆναι, λέαιναν ζωγραφοῦσιν. αὕτη γὰρ δις οὐ κυῖσκει.⁵³

[How a woman that has given birth once]. When they want to signify a woman that has given birth once, they depict a lioness; for the latter does not conceive twice.

Instead, to *write* or *draw* a glyph of a lioness is said to *show* or *mean* a woman who has given birth once. Therefore it is the observation, claim, or convention that a lioness gives birth only once that is used to establish that a woman who has given birth once can be signified by a glyph of a lioness. The connection between the sign and what it depicts differs, therefore, from the connection between the sign and what it means. The connection between a glyph of a lioness and the animal itself is the fact that a lioness, or a glyph showing a lioness, can be used to teach us what the word 'lioness' means (via, for example, an ostensive definition). Since either the depiction or the item depicted may be used for the same purpose, namely to explain what 'lioness' means, the glyph may be substituted for the animal it depicts. The connection between the glyph and its meaning, on the other hand, is mediated by the explanation.

Following Van Bekkum's analysis Sluiter recognizes a precursor for the emergence of the commentary form in the exegesis of sacred literature. Even as such a precursor, however, it represents a culmination of an exegetical tradition that originated not in textual studies, but in such things as 'divine signs, meteorological phenomena, and possibly even oracles'.⁵⁴ These *mirabilia* not only provide certain clear parallels with the paradoxographical exegeses, but also indicate a possible rationale for the interpretative methodology. Moreover, this was a possibility concerning which glossography itself was perhaps not unaware. Fragment 52 of the grammarian Dionysius Thrax,⁵⁵ for example, appears to point to a 'conception of semiology as a science that can embrace, not only linguistic, but also natural signs'.⁵⁶

Moreover, not only does the source for the fragment provide a significant link not only to the broader subject of symbolism, but to that of hieroglyphic

symbolism in particular, but such a conception of the peculiar suitability of hieroglyphic Egyptian for sacred texts is also fully in accord with Egyptian practice itself, since at this period demotic was in such wide use for administrative purposes that hieroglyphs had become the medium of preference for formulaic and ritualistic use.⁵⁷ Accordingly, Egyptian wisdom literature ensures its transmission precisely because it exemplifies *mꜣt* (truth, justice) preserved in written form.⁵⁸

Ἑρμῆς μὲν γὰρ ὁ διδάσκαλός μου, πολλάκις μοι διαλεγόμενος καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ τοῦ Τὰτ ἐνίοτε παρόντος, ἔλεγεν ὅτι δόξει τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσί μου τοῖς βιβλίοις ἀπλουστάτη εἶναι ἡ σύνταξις καὶ σαφής, ἐκ δὲ τῶν ἐναντίων ἀσαφῆς οὖσα καὶ κεκρυμμένον τὸν νοῦν τῶν λόγων ἔχουσα, καὶ ἔτι ἀσαφεστάτη, τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὕστερον βουλευθέντων τὴν ἡμετέραν διάλεκτον εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν μεθερμηνεῦσαι, ὅπερ ἔσται τῶν γεγραμμένων μεγίστη διαστροφή τε καὶ ἀσάφεια. ὁ δὲ λόγος τῇ πατρώᾳ διαλέκτῳ ἐρμηνευόμενος ἔχει σαφῆ τὸν τῶν λόγων νοῦν. καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ τῆς φωνῆς ποιὸν καὶ ἡ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων [. . .] ὀνομάτων ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἔχει τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῶν λεγομένων. ὅσον οὖν δυνατόν ἐστὶ σοι, βασιλεῦ, πάντα δὲ δύνασαι, τὸν λόγον διατήρησον ἀνερμηνευτον, ἵνα μήτε εἰς Ἑλληνας ἔλθῃ τοιαῦτα μυστήρια, μήτε ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὑπερήφανος φράσις καὶ ἐκκελυμένη καὶ ὥσπερ κεκαλλωπισμένη ἐξίτηλον ποιήσῃ τὸ σεμνὸν καὶ στιβαρόν, καὶ τὴν ἐνεργητικὴν τῶν ὀνομάτων φράσιν. Ἑλληνες γάρ, ὦ βασιλεῦ, λόγους ἔχουσι κενοὺς ἀποδείξεων ἐνεργητικούς, καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν Ἑλλήνων φιλοσοφία, λόγων ψόφος. ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ λόγοις χρώμεθα. ἀλλὰ φωναῖς μεσταῖς τῶν ἔργων.⁵⁹

My teacher, Hermes – often speaking to me in private, sometimes in the presence of Tat – used to say that those reading my books would find their organization very simple and clear when, on the contrary, it is unclear and keeps the meaning of its words concealed; furthermore, it will be entirely unclear (he said) when the Greeks eventually desire to translate our language to their own and thus produce in writing the greatest distortion and unclarity. But this discourse, expressed in our paternal language, keeps clear the meaning of its words. The very quality of the speech and the [sound] of Egyptian words have in themselves the energy of the objects they speak of. Therefore, my king, in so far as you have the power (who are all powerful), keep the discourse uninterpreted, lest mysteries of such greatness come to the Greeks, lest the extravagant, flaccid and (as it were) dandified Greek idiom extinguish something stately and concise, the energetic idiom of (Egyptian) usage. For the Greeks have empty speeches, O king, that are energetic only in what they demonstrate, and this is the philosophy of the Greeks, an inane foolosophy of speeches. We, by contrast, use not speeches but sounds that are full of action.⁶⁰

Though a possible objection to the idea that pristine Egyptian texts appears to be voiced in Asclepius' observation that the style of the Hermetic texts is 'unclear and keeps the meaning of its words concealed', the text contrasts lack

of clarity as a result of ‘concealing’ meaning for the sake of preserving original energy (*ἐνέργειαν*) and that arising from the intrinsically dissolute (*ἐκκελυμένη*) nature of the Greek translations. Seeking the meaning of the words in the original Egyptian language, it is suggested, will remove the obscurity and render the structure of the books ‘very simple and clear’ (*ἀπλουστάτη καὶ σαφής*).⁶¹ Copenhaver further notes that Derchain recognizes an Egyptian-conceived ‘definition of the function of language’ and that Fowden reads ‘evidence of Egyptian linguistic nativism’ in what he calls the ‘conceit’ regarding ineffectual translations from the Egyptian into the Greek language.⁶² Nonetheless, strong Platonizing undercurrents inform the contrast between ‘arrogant . . . and as it were showy’ (*ὑπερήφανος φράσις . . . καὶ ὥσπερ κεκαλλωπισμένη*) Greek speech, on the one hand, as exemplified in Greek philosophy – punningly referred to as ‘the mere sound of speech’ (*λόγων ψόφος*) – and, on the other hand, ‘the ^{power} of the Egyptian words’ (*ἡ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἰσχύς ὀνομάτων*),⁶³ which ‘has the energy of what is spoken of’ (*ἔχει τὴν ἐνέργειαν τῶν λεγομένων*). Clement too makes the point; nor is he the only patristic source to raise the matter.⁶⁴

The particular power inherent in Egyptian for theological purposes, which both Hermeticism and Neoplatonism endorse, and the doctrine of untranslatability it entails, is at least in part reversed in the corpus of Greek and demotic magical papyri. These often bilingual texts not only frequently intersperse a predominantly Greek or demotic sequence with both shorter and longer passages in the other of the two languages, they also impute a ritual power and significance peculiar to Greek itself.⁶⁵ In these sequences correctly inflected Greek glosses on the demotic text are introduced, along with Greek loanwords, suggesting a translation of a Greek original into demotic preserving magically significant Greek features in order not to undermine the power inherent therein. The Neoplatonic injunction concerning the untranslatability of original languages here actually provides a model for a situation in which Greek is accorded magical priority over Egyptian.

The corpus of Greek and demotic magical papyri is of interest in this connection to the extent it exemplifies several of the features of the symbolic method in practice. Three terms from these texts are of particular relevance: *σύμβολα μυστικά*, *ἐρμηνεύματα*, and *συνθήματα*.⁶⁶ Each reoccurs in the contexts of the endeavour to synthesize the Greek and Egyptian hieroglyphic traditions, the mystery-terminology of Clement’s analysis of hieroglyphs, and the methodology employed in their exegesis in, for example, Iamblichus. The third term, most distinctively, also suggests a connection between the thematic force of the glyphs chosen for exegesis in Clement (and sources) and the formulae for magical syntheses or compounds, particularly since *συνθήματα* is also readable as ‘signs’ or ‘tokens’. Not only does the principle involved in both cases seem to involve the same hermeneutic principles, but the ingredients of the compounds (i.e. elements in the syntheses) for the latter correspond, sometimes in specific detail,⁶⁷ with hieroglyphs given symbolic-allegorical exegesis elsewhere. In one instance⁶⁸ actual examples of hieroglyphic script are specified in the context of securing secrecy about what is revealed in initiation into the mysteries by

means of what are generally referred to in demotic as examples of *gh^cl^cgter* (χαράκτήρ). Of the five glyphs used here, at least four are genuinely Egyptian. They are, in full: (i) a geometric arrow design; (ii) the *hpr*-scarab; (iii) the *wdꜣt*-eye; (iv) two sticks crossed; and (v) a sitting dog. The sequence as composed cannot be translated according to standard Egyptian grammar,⁶⁹ however, if the sequence is read as a *σύμβολον* according to the sort of principles applied by Clement, the elements in synthetic combination can be read as establishing (rather than being justified by) their mutual interrelations.⁷⁰

There is some precedent in the secondary literature for adducing several of the elements of the hieroglyphic traditions as detailed earlier in an effort to emphasize not only generic affiliations, but, in fact, sources of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*. I have already noted that only two Greek titles specifically concerned with the Egyptian language are extant from the period (the *Hieroglyphica* of Chaeremon and Horapollo respectively). Only one (the latter) survives intact, and it is in the former that we have at least partial or occasional precedents in the Greek tradition both for the Egyptological material. We have further precedents for the kind of natural scientific discussion which informs the *Hieroglyphica* too: e.g. in the *De historia animalium* of Aristotle, the *De animalibus* of Philo,⁷¹ the *De natura animalium* of Aelian, the *Naturalis historia* of Pliny, the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidorus, the *Hexaemera* of saints Basil and Ambrose, the peripatetic *Physiognomica*, and the *Physiologus*.⁷² There is, in other words, more evidence of elements deriving from the Greek hieroglyphic and natural scientific traditions than from the Egyptian material.

Leemans' commentary on the text⁷³ and other systematic attempts to distinguish Egyptian hieroglyphic material from material originating in Graeco-Roman sources have identified many of the educational, scientific, encyclopaedic, or mythographical sources for the *Hieroglyphica*. Parallels with the *Φυσιολογικά* attributed to Manetho and the seven works⁷⁴ attributed to the pseudo-democritean Bolus in the *Suda* in particular have fostered further historicizing analyses with a particular interest in the question of *genre*-attribution. Scott, for example, in reference to the literary *genre* of the *Physiologus*, notes that:

Occasional paradoxographical references are part of the literary discourse of the age, so that e.g. an offhand reference to the phoenix can be made as early as Clement of Rome. There are numerous references in Philo, who devotes a treatise to beasts. But extensive treatment of paradoxographical material in the formative years of Christian theology is unknown.⁷⁵

It is characteristic of this historicizing tendency, however, to question whether the 'marvellous' aspect of the material is original to the natural histories themselves or constitutes an intrusive accretion of paradoxography as an already distinct *genre*.

'Aristotle' has one after another of the Bestiary tales, – of the Eagle, the Hoopoe, the Night-raven, the Hyaena, the Ichneumon and so on. Some

fifteen of these are in the *Historia Animalium*, and the curious thing is that they occur in just two places: I find eight in the Ninth Book, between pp. 612 and 630, and seven in the Sixth, between pp. 544 and 589. Are we looking for sources of the Physiologist in Aristotle, or is the Physiologist guiding us towards alien, fabulous, non-Aristotelian parts of the *Natural History*?⁷⁶

Even if it could be established that Egyptian sources exercised some sort of direct linguistic or thematic influence on the text in this way, the same reservations concerning their explanatory value would have to apply. The suggestive (but inconclusive) linguistic and generic indications of Copticity are, however, bolstered by reference to the works of Horapollo's counterpart in the ongoing polemical exchange between Coptic Christians and Hellenized pagans in late 5th century Egypt. One of our Coptic sources, Shenoute, was also familiar with the 3rd century Egyptian zoological and allegorical text under the title *Physiologus*.⁷⁷ Yet the parallels with the material in Horapollo which might have derived from knowledge of the *Physiologus* within the Coptic tradition also have multiple parallel attestations elsewhere. In particular, the sections in Horapollo dealing with the phoenix and the hyena show close correlation, though the especial value of the Shenoutean corpus for the reconstruction of the Coptic text resides elsewhere, in the passage on the fruit of the sycamore (and possibly also on the honey-bee), both contained in *Ad philosophum gentilem*.⁷⁸

There are other reasons for thinking the primary significance of the natural scientific material for which we have evidence of knowledge on Shenoute's part is not as source-critical evidence. It is intended by him not merely as a record of empirical data, but is also deployed as part of a philosophical polemic against the misconception that the generated world can be used as a basis for speculation on the ungenerated world. However the question is resolved, an investigation designed to determine the extent of the influence of natural science sources on the exegetical content of the *Hieroglyphica*, though leading to a reconstruction of the historical line of generic development insofar as it supports observations on the aggregation of source materials, cannot clarify the use to which that material is put. This is an objection to source-criticism in general, of course, but the fact that precisely this kind of engagement with Horapollo's text has (along with philological criticism by Egyptologists) dominated the commentaries means it is a point worth repeating in order to sharpen our eye to the use Horapollo makes of his sources.

With respect to the compositional circumstances of the natural history material found in the text, as well as amplifications of, elaborations on, and corrections to its themes and conclusions, commentaries have tended to take one of the following two lines: the first, to offer a philological study in the tradition of ancient lexicography. In these cases, retrospective attempts at the rehabilitation of the *Hieroglyphica* have conceded at least partial lexicographical credentials to the work. As a result the text has latterly been acknowledged as containing a core of genuinely Egyptian observations, especially in Book One,

and a collection of later additions to that material, especially in the sequences originating in conception and execution with its editor (Philip) in the manner of a compendium drawing on Greek doxographical sources. This concession explicitly emphasizes, however, the comparative paucity of genuinely Egyptian hieroglyphic material. It also acknowledges that the standards of correctness to which the *explanations* might have claimed to have adhered are layered and not of a uniform origin. Consequently, even allowing for the dilution of Horapollo's accurate material by the expansion in Book Two by Philip, there still remains a sense in which it is understood that the allegorizing explanations contained in Horapollo's text cannot be maintained. Even where the meanings of hieroglyphs had been correctly interpreted (or nearly so) by Horapollo, the proper way to explain how they come to mean what they do was the province of the decipherment project, not allegoristic interpretation.

In this way, this second layer of commentary, in which the explanations in the *Hieroglyphica* are represented as an extended fabrication based on the glyph-sequences and drawn from a backdrop of Hellenistic antiquarianism, allows critics to reassert the view that the *Hieroglyphica* is an exercise amounting in effect to the production of an eclectic compendium of diverse commonplaces and antiquarian lore. The format of an interpretative treatise is used, it is argued, as a blind to conceal its true origins as a purely imaginative elaboration of popular Egyptological themes. This judgement, however, is founded on the assumption that the Hellenistic picture stands in need of correction in the direction of Egyptology, whereas in fact what is needed is some clarification of how the Hellenistic picture was supposed to be applied to the hieroglyphic material. To this end, and insofar as both the earlier and the later material may only have been imperfectly understood or represented by the text, there has also recently been an attempt to develop a consideration of the text as a semi-otic resource, treating it as a Greek hermeneutic composition partly on Egyptian glyphs, partly on Hellenizing lore, offering hermeneutic strategies for the reception of an unknown written language.⁷⁹

The difficulties of such an attempt are rooted in the question of the systematic nature of the connections established between the glyphs and what they show or signify. In any given case these connections are determined by individual explanations, from which a general semiotic model, within which the specific hieroglyphic variables operate, must be derived. Insofar as what is shown or meant by a glyph is interdependent with the form of the explanation one has to give of it, the peculiar contribution of the *Hieroglyphica* on this reading lies primarily in the fact that the explanations themselves are not items of arcane significance, but the means whereby the hieroglyphs received their significance. In other words, the explanation does not serve to unlock an arcane meaning hidden in the glyph, but secures that meaning, establishing the glyph as significant. But if this is the case, then the explanations of Horapollo's glyphs determine in what sense the glyphs the 'hieroglyphs' are meaningful at all. If the *Hieroglyphica* exemplifies a possible *determination* of the meanings of hieroglyphs in a line of development from their formal and representational characteristics

via a method for establishing their meaningful employment, then the text was meant neither to recover ancient Egyptian meanings via a *reconstruction* from a pre-conceived understanding of meaningful use, nor to formulate a methodology for such a procedure.

The outstanding question, therefore, is what the motivations, objectives, and presuppositions of such a methodology in fact are, rather than the question posed by Horapollo's critics as to whether there has been a failure of judgement in determining the 'correct' methodology in the first place. The application of Egyptology, Greek natural history, and something approaching distinctively Renaissance archetypes of iconic language⁸⁰ to the work has undoubtedly contributed to the success of the rehabilitation of the text as the subject of modern scholarly interest. But to address the question of motivation this will in addition involve determination of specifically internal features of the text's methodological presuppositions. Once these have been established, it will be possible to examine the text's explanatory structure of the constituent units of composition, the conception of meaning which that structure entails, the explanatory resources it utilizes, and the methodological opportunities that affords.

The 'physiological' – that is, natural scientific – interest of the *Hieroglyphica* is the most familiar of its curricular components. We have seen how the text draws freely on Greek natural history as well as Egyptian cultural ethnography. But it does so not only in its choice of hieroglyphs, but also in its explanation of the meanings of those glyphs. These natural and cultural resources, as such, exercise a thematic emphasis on the realm of *generated* phenomena, a feature to which the language employed draws particular attention. Horapollo makes extensive use of cognates of γένεσις (generation): eighty-four occurrences altogether, including eleven in section headings.⁸¹ Apart from the structurally critical terms γράφω (concerning means or media of production of the glyphs) and σημαίνω (concerning performative aspects in use or function) and respective cognates, 'generation' is in this way not merely a prominent topic, but the *only* topic either textually explicit (as earlier) or thematically implicit (as in the examples of spontaneous generation⁸² or cosmological elements) throughout *both* books. Nonetheless, the role this thematic emphasis on the realm of becoming occupies in the *Hieroglyphica* differs from the use of the same or related material in the context of a treatise on natural science or physics as such. Both in view of the self-identification of the *Hieroglyphica* as ἐρμηνεία, whereby it is presumably methodologically motivated, and in view of the fact that the material is cited in an explanatory capacity (rather than that which is to be explained), it will be necessary to clarify the techniques the use of which distinguishes its interpretative methodology from the mere collation of Egyptian hieroglyphs with Greek natural scientific material concerning the items they depict.

The aim here, then, is to demonstrate that Horapollo does not merely provide a one-for-one correspondence or parallel between a hieroglyphic sign and a natural phenomenon by cross-referenced analogies, nor the development of a systematic or exhaustive *excursus* on a subject suggested by the item glyphically depicted.⁸³ If Horapollo had been interested merely in compiling theological,

astronomical, and natural historical *ὑπομνήματα*, as a work of comparative and historical empiricism (no matter how fantastic or unverifiable), it would have sufficed for him to note such correspondences and analogies. But as *ἐρμηνεία* it must, and of course does, involve recognizable figures of reasoning for the exegeses provided. To that end, we should take a closer look at the structure of the individual sections with a view to identifying the elements of which they are composed and a perspicuous presentation of the interrelations between them.

If for Horapollo, objects (*πράγματα*) are not what is signified by expressions (*λέξεις*), in the sense that even if he maintains that a mimetic relation holds between the two, this is nevertheless not the semantic (sign-meaning) relation. There might, however, still be a stronger sense in which signs are mimetic of objects. One such possible sense is that in which the substitution of a glyph for what it depicts may invoke an essentialist conception of ostensive definition, such that, even if the relation between Horapollonian signs and objects is mimetic, but non-semantic, still perhaps it exhibits a linguistic naturalism (as opposed to conventionalism).

It is important to maintain a clear difference between a naturalist/conventionalist distinction in terms of the appropriacy of phonetic or literate articulation of one's mental contents and that between those concepts and the objects they conceptualize. The latter is a prior natural mimetic relation such as is invariant from language-community to community because the mimetic relation is *ontologically* determined, but is not, as the former is, dependent on the exercise of a technical expertise in virtue an acquired *epistemic* advantage of the kind envisaged in the *Cratylus*.

According to the version of linguistic naturalism endorsed by Cratylus in Plato's dialogue of that name, linguistic forms – primarily nouns – must bear a mimetic relationship to the *nominatum*. Thus, objective natures are attributed to names. A corollary of this is that there is an objective expertise of naming postulated for employing and deploying names accurately. Also, each name, insofar as it is composed of elements, is significant because each element has significance: for example, the liquid lateral consonant λ (*lambda*), for example, mimetically contributes 'smoothness' as a semantic component of the word in which it is used, while the liquid rhotic consonant ρ (*rho*) is used to imitate motion.⁸⁴ On the basis of this hypothesis of descriptive content, compound names are given an analysis in terms of atomic names, which themselves are derived from imitative primary sounds (letters).⁸⁵

Thus, etymology establishes the mimetic relationship between language (names) and reality (the Form of names), but not knowledge of things in themselves, without which, even if sounds/letters are etymological elements of natural names, convention might still determine the actual (if not ideal) use of names. The possibility of etymological exegesis of the phonetic elements of speech, and consequently the literal elements of writing, does not depend, then, on reading mimesis as the hypothesis that this is how language historically developed. If we are then to assume the possibility that the historical development of the actual use of names might, in the absence of knowledge of things

in themselves, be determined by convention, rather than naturalism, it is the rather the permanence and singularity of the objects of philosophical thought (*τὰ ἀεὶ ὄντα καὶ πεφυκότα*), and not simply the correspondence of each sound to a discrete element of reality as established by the etymological method, that is thought to justify the etymological enterprise as furnishing reliable analyses. The usefulness of etymology, then, is constrained by the requirement of just such independent knowledge. One alternative to reading the *Cratylus* here as offering a substantive account of the historical development of language is to read the etymological passages of the *Cratylus* as an explanation of etymological method itself, rather than of specific insights to be gained by its application. If those passages are just such an illustration of the employment of a particular technique for analyzing words, rather than of any results it might in practice reach, then perhaps there is similar scope for an understanding of the first elements (*πρῶτα στοιχεῖα*) of, for example, Clement's hieroglyphic analysis too as implying independent epistemological objectives which are otherwise absent from the purely philologically orientated Egyptological reading to which it is typically submitted.

What evidence do we have in Horapollo for linguistic naturalism of this sort and what are the possible epistemological constraints on its application? The first of two key sections is 1.70.

[Πῶς σκιάζουσι σκότος]. Σκότος δὲ λέγοντες, κροκοδείλου οὐρὰν ζωγραφοῦσιν, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἄλλως εἰς ἀφανισμόν καὶ ἀπώλειαν φέρει ὁ κροκόδειλος, οὗ ἂν λάβηται ζώου, εἰ μὴ τῇ οὐρᾷ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ διαπληκτίσας ἄτονον παρασκευάσει· ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ τῷ μέρει ἢ τοῦ κροκοδείλου ἰσχύς καὶ ἀνδρεία ὑπάρχει. Ἰκανῶν δὲ καὶ ἄλλων ὑπαρχόντων σημείων ἐν τῇ τῶν κροκοδείλων φύσει, αὐτάρκη τὰ δόξαντα ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ συγγράμματι εἶπεῖν.⁸⁶

[How they adumbrate darkness]. To say darkness, they depict the tail of a crocodile, for by no other means does the crocodile bring about the darkness of death and destruction of whichever animal it may have caught, if not by first wrangling it with its tail, and rendering it immobile: for in this part the strength and vigour of the crocodile subsists. And even though there are sufficient other signs subsisting in the nature of the crocodile, those that appear in the first book are sufficient.

Though the glyph of a crocodile-tail could be used to teach someone what the word 'crocodile-tail' means, just as pointing at a crocodile-tail can, i.e. by ostensive definition, examples from Horapollo of what I am here calling *natural signs* in fact maintain a distinction between what the glyph directly 'names' (i.e. the natural or artefactual item depicted) and what it thereby indirectly signifies. This is because the mimetic relationship between glyph and *nominatum* ensures that it is the features of the sign that are shared with the object so expressed that are said to be signified. Horapollonian hieroglyphic instruction, therefore,

takes place both ostensively in one sense and discursively in another, through the specification of these shared predicable attributes. The predicable attributes of a serpent in Horapollo, for example, include ‘variegation’, ‘heaviness’, and ‘smoothness’. By virtue of its predicable attributes, then, a serpent-sign can also be used to mean ‘variegated’, ‘heavy’, or ‘smooth’, but *only by virtue of the serpent-sign itself being variegated*.⁸⁷ Each sign, therefore, insofar as it is composed of predicable attributes it has in common with the object depicted, is significant because each element exists in the nature of the phenomenon itself: for example, something ‘subsisting in the nature of crocodiles’ (ὕπαρχόντων . . . ἐν τῇ τῶν κροκοδείλων φύσει), variegation in the nature of the serpent, contributing, by mimesis ‘variegation’ as a semantic component of the glyph in which it is depicted. I will return to the issue of the mimetic relationship between signs and their referents in the context of possible metaphysical applications, particularly as they reflect the hieroglyphic interests of Plotinus in section 4.3 of Chapter 4 in this book.

In any account of the relation between a glyph (which depicts an object) and the meaning of that glyph, the proper application of the glyph pivots around how the sign is used to signify. This is what is set out in the causal clause of the section. One possibility is that this relationship should be seen in the light of debates over the role of signs as *evidence* or *grounds* for inferential argumentation, particularly in the context of scientific methodology.⁸⁸

The Aristotelian account of sign-use in particular is explicit about the ways in which significative and causal relations overlap. According to Aristotle, things in the world, as identified by a proper name or common noun, are *causally* related to affections of the soul. The object, that is, ‘likens the effect unto itself’ (τὸ ποιητικὸν ὁμοιοῦν ἑαυτῷ τὸ πάσχον).⁸⁹ This causal relation distinguishes such *likenesses* (ὁμοιώματα) from mere resemblances and entails that both affections of the soul and what they are affections of – actual things (πράγματα) – are ‘the same for all’ (πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά). Spoken sounds, on the other hand, are *symbols* of these affections of the soul and written marks are *symbols* of spoken sounds.⁹⁰ As such both spoken sounds and written marks are varied (‘not the same for all’), i.e. conventional. Nevertheless, because affections of the soul and what affections are likenesses of are the same for all, spoken and written conventional symbols are, *in the first instance*, signs of affections of the soul. This distinction, subsequently maintained by Augustine in terms of ‘natural’ and ‘given’ signs on the basis of the absence and presence respectively of intentionality, provides for the possibility of distinguishing signs which are not also *conventional symbols*, namely, *natural signs*.⁹¹

Furthermore, a name signifies that which an explanation of the name signifies, whether or not what it signifies either exists or has an essence.⁹² The absence or presence of an essence, therefore, informs a further distinction: that between a sign (σημεῖον) and a demonstration (ἀποδείξις) respectively. Signs, in consequence, offer only evidence for rationally persuasive conclusions, whereas demonstrations provide for deductively valid inferences.⁹³ Within the former

class, a further distinction between a sign (*σημεῖον*) and a token (*τεκμήριον*) can also be observed. In the former case, the evidence provided is merely probable or likely; in the latter, conclusive. The relationship between sign and *significatum*, therefore, licenses valid inferences in the cases of both conclusive tokens (*τεκμήρια*) and probable signs (*σημεῖα*), but distinguishes those inferences as either ‘demonstrative’ or merely ‘probable’ accordingly. Divinatory and astrological signs, for example, though lacking a guaranteed epistemic relation with what they signify, nonetheless provide for the possibility of *accurate* divination and astrology, even if they are not apodeictically conclusive.

We might then adopt something like an Aristotelian view of Horapollo’s method, for example by treating the form of the glyph, i.e. its depicting such-and-such an item, as something like the minor premiss of a syllogism, with the explanation acting as the major premiss. Together, they license an inference to the meaning of that glyph.⁹⁴ So, for example:

[Πῶς διαμονὴν καὶ ἀσφάλειαν σημαίνουνσιν]. Ὄρνυγος ὅστοῦν ζωγραφούμενον διαμονὴν καὶ ἀσφάλειαν σημαίνει, διότι δυσπαθὲς ἐστὶ τὸ τοῦ ζώου ὅστοῦν.⁹⁵

[How they signify endurance and stability]. The bone of a quail when delineated signifies endurance and stability; because the bone of this animal is impassive.

Allowing for conversion between the terms impassivity (*δυσπάθεια*) and enduring and stable (*διαμονὴ καὶ ἀσφάλεια*), the section might be formalized as follows:

Minor Premiss	A glyph of a quail-bone signifies the properties of a quail-bone.	S – M
Major Premiss	The properties of a quail-bone are impassivity.	M – P
Conclusion	Therefore, a glyph of a quail-bone signifies impassivity (i.e. endurance and stability).	∴ S – P

This kind of formalization is constrained, however, by the necessity of supplying in a wide range of cases one or more intermediate inferential steps, for example, the commonly occurring assumption that a glyph depicting a non-human creature exhibiting certain properties signifies a human exhibiting the same properties.

[Τί μέλαιναν περιστερὰν]. Γυναῖκα χήραν ἐπιμείναςαν ἄχρι θανάτου θέλοντες σημῆναι, περιστερὰν μέλαιναν ζωγραφοῦσιν· αὕτη γὰρ οὐ συμίγνυται ἑτέρῳ ἀνδρί, ἕως οὗ χηρεύσῃ.⁹⁶

[What a black dove]. When they want to signify a woman who remains a widow till death, they depict a black dove; for this (bird) does not have intercourse with another male from the time that it is widowed.

Minor Premiss	A glyph of a black dove signifies the properties of a black dove.	S – M
Major Premiss	The properties of a black dove are remaining a widow till death.	M – P
Conclusion	Therefore, a glyph of a black dove signifies remaining a widow till death.	∴ S – P

This ‘inferential model’ of meaning suggests the possibility of inference not only from the sign to its meaning, but also from given meanings to appropriate signs to express those meanings, as a productive method for supplementing the signary.⁹⁷ If this is right, it may shed some light on the process of editorial addition to the range of glyphs included in the text alluded to in the *incipit* to Book Two. The variety of inferential applications available through the use of signs may therefore indicate logical reasons for variations in the exegetical strategies the *Hieroglyphica* exhibits.

Even if this is the case, however, the question again arises as to what extent this might further commit Horapollo to the correspondence of the observations provided in explanation of hieroglyphs with factual conditions. Sbordone notes:

Horap. ha ragione quando dichiara che siffatte decorazioni si facevano *συμβολικῶς*: ha torto invece dal momento che pone a base del simbolo una pretesa *φύσις* di conio ellenistico.⁹⁸

If the observations of natural phenomena adduced as aetiological explanations are, at least in principle, falsifiable, then the status of the inferred meaning of signs might be thought susceptible not only to philological objections of the kind with which Sbordone is concerned, but also to the objection that if the evidence of a sign can be shown to be false, any inference drawn from it, even if valid, will be unsound, and, therefore, incapable of expressing the meaning the explanation supplies. What is more, the explanation, which serves as the middle terms between sign and inference, also relies on empirical claims which might turn out to be true or false. Here too is an opportunity for the inference to fail.

One possible answer to this problem can be developed by examining a few of the more-or-less opaque sections. Consider, for example, the case of 2.34, where a connection is established between ants and origanum used as an insect-repellent:

[*Τί δηλοῦσιν ὀρίγανον ἱερογλυφοῦντες*]. *Λεῖψιν μυρμήκων βουλόμενοι σημῆναι, ὀρίγανον ἱερογλυφοῦσιν· αὕτη γὰρ ποιεῖ λείπειν τοὺς μύρμηκας, ἀποτιθεμένη ἐν τόπῳ ὅπόθεν ἐξέρχονται.*⁹⁹

[What they show by hieratically carving origanum]. When they want to signify the departure of ants, they hieratically carve origanum. For if it is laid down in a place out of which ants come, it makes them leave.

Here, the explanation of the meaning of the hieroglyph depicting origanum is clearly causal. The reason why a glyph of origanum means ‘the departure of ants’ (λεῖψιν μυρμήκων) is that origanum ‘makes ants leave’ (ποιεῖ λείπειν τοὺς μύρμηκας).

Or, again, in 1.38, where the connection is between *writing tools* and *writing*:

[Πῶς αἰγύπτια γράμματα]. Αἰγύπτια δὲ γράμματα δηλοῦντες, ἢ ἱερογραμματέα, ἢ πέρας, μέλαν καὶ κόσκινον καὶ σχοινίον ζωγραφοῦσιν. αἰγύπτια μὲν γράμματα διὰ τὸ τούτοις πάντα παρ’ Αἰγυπτίοις τὰ γραφόμενα ἐκτελεῖσθαι· σχοίνῳ γὰρ γράφουσι καὶ οὐκ ἄλλῳ τινί.¹⁰⁰

[How Egyptian script]. To show Egyptian script, or a sacred scribe, or a boundary, they depict ink, a sieve, and a reed. All script among the Egyptians is accomplished by means of these things; for they write with a reed and nothing else.

In this example, there is also a clearly marked causal connection between writing implements and writing: ‘by means of these things all writings among the Egyptians are executed’ (διὰ τὸ τούτοις πάντα παρ’ Αἰγυπτίοις τὰ γραφόμενα ἐκτελεῖσθαι). In the first example, the causal explanation that origanum has insect-repelling properties – i.e. that origanum is a *reason* that ants leave (or a *cause* of their leaving) – is itself introduced in order to explain (i.e. clarify) the semantic connection between causing ants to leave and the absence of ants. In the second example, however, ink, sieve, and reed are connected to writing both as writing implements (where the emphasis is on the fact that, *qua* implements, they are *causally effective* in the production of writing), but also as implements *for writing* (where the emphasis is on the fact that what they are causally effective in producing is *writing*). In each of these cases two types of connection are established by the explanation between the glyph and its meaning. The difference between the two kinds of connection is that whereas *qua* effects (writing; the departure of ants) are *symptomatic* of their respective causes (ink, sieve, and reed; origanum), it is *criterial* of the characters depicting these causes and meaning ‘writing’ and ‘the departure of ants’ that the items depicted be causes of the effects signified. The production of writing is *symptomatic* of the use of writing tools (there is a causal relation between the two), but it is *criterial* of their being writing tools that what they serve to produce is *writing*. Insofar as the causal relation between the two serves to explain the conceptual relation, the former is, as such, not identical with the latter. The distinction can be brought out in another way using the first example too. Although ants may, as a matter of fact, not leave a place in which there is origanum, despite its being in fact a reason for them to do so, there is no question of the ‘origanum’ hieroglyph *meaning* ‘the departure of ants’ in a sense that does not preclude their still being present. The causal link, in other words, is defeasible; the conceptual link is not.

The strength of claims concerning the *meaning* of glyphs by inference is not then exclusively a matter of determining whether the inference is sound (based on true premisses). Indeed, the truth of the claims made is not clearly the basis

for the explanatory of the meaning of the glyph at all. If it were not the case, for example, that Egyptian scribes wrote with ink and reed, the *explanation* that a glyph depicting ink and a reed signified Egyptian writing could not in fact do any explanatory work. But the only explanatory work the ‘natural’ fact can do in the event of its being true is that of explaining *why* it is that the glyphic depiction of Egyptian writing tools is in fact in use as a sign signifying writing. Similarly, even if it were the case that ants avoided places in which origanum was to be found, an explanation in terms of origanum repelling ants merely explains why the glyph bears the meaning it in fact does, rather than that the meaning the glyph signifies is in fact ‘the departure of ants’.

In other words, the absence in the text of examples that I described as ‘pictographic’ in the narrow sense is not a consequence of Horapollo being committed to a theory of meaning dependent on the existence of causal links between the item depicted by the glyph and what it signifies. Such causal links do not feature in the case of ‘pictographic’ hieroglyphs, since they are amenable to explanations in terms of ostensive definition, but even in those cases where a causal explanation is available its purpose is to explain the semantic relation between a glyph and its meaning. For that reason causal explanations cannot be sufficient features of explanations of the meaning of hieroglyphs at all, even to the extent that they are amenable to them. Though Horapollo in these cases employs a method in accordance with which the meaning of glyphs is explained through shared attributes, namely those items (largely of Egyptological provenance) depicted by the glyphs, in this respect he need not be understood to be reliant on the plausibility of his observations in artefactual and natural history for the semantic purposes to which he puts them. In other words, if the relevant beliefs about things turned out to be false, that would not necessitate the use of a different glyph to signify the same meaning; it would only require his leaning on different justifications for glyphs bearing the meanings they do (perhaps including explanations involving purely ostensive definitions).

Inferential procedures from empirical observations do *not*, then, establish the semantic content of a glyph, but only explain the origins of or reasons for the signary as appropriate to bear the meanings they do. They therefore do *not* establish a commitment on Horapollo’s part to an evidence-based theory of meaning. Upon seeing the hieroglyphic sign – in the case of 1.70, the crocodile-tail (κροκοδείλου οὐράν) – one is licensed by what has so often been observed in connection with crocodile-tails generally, namely, the cause of disappearance (ἀφανίσις) and the destruction of seized prey, to understand a semantic relation between ‘disappearance’ (ἀφανίσις) and ‘shadow’ (σκότος) which is quite independent of the natural historical facts. Therefore, a glyph of a crocodile’s tail can be used to signify σκότος.¹⁰¹ Similarly, in 2.38, in explanation of why a glyph depicting *a lion tearing its cubs to pieces* signifies immoderate anger, the natural fact that lion-cub bones emit fire when struck is cited. However, it is the connection drawn between fire and anger¹⁰² that legitimizes the inference from the natural fact that lion-cub bones emit fire when struck to the conclusion that a glyph depicting *a lion tearing its cubs to pieces* signifies immoderate anger.

To illustrate the difficulty in certain cases of seeing in what sense an explanation actually explains the meaning of a glyph at all, 1.61 presents an instructive case. In this case the verb *μηνύουσι*, a legalistic term meaning to ‘make a disclosure, lay an information against’ is used to describe the function of the glyph. Though *μηνύοντες* syntactically corresponds to *δηλοῦντες* elsewhere in the text, the role of the explanation in establishing the reason for the sign (*the serpent and in the middle a great palace*) to signify its meaning (*a cosmic ruler*) is less straightforward.

[Πῶς μηνύουσι κοσμοκράτορα]. Πάλιν δὲ τὸν βασιλέα κοσμοκράτορα νομίζοντες καὶ μηνύοντες, αὐτὸν μὲν ὄφιν ζωγραφοῦσιν, ἐν μέσῳ δὲ αὐτοῦ οἶκον μέγαν δεικνύουσιν εὐλόγως· ὁ γὰρ βασίλειος οἶκος παραύ, του <τέστι κρατῶν> ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.¹⁰³

[How they disclose the cosmic ruler]. Again when they would indicate and disclose the cosmic ruler, they depict the same serpent, and in the middle of it they show a large house, and with good reason: for the royal abode [signifies] the pharaoh, that is he who rules in the cosmos.

In order to understand the explanation as an explanation, the reader must recall that the *serpent* had been associated with the cosmos in 1.2 by virtue of a formal resemblance between the scales of a serpent and the image of the stars against the background of the sky. However, attention is also drawn to the conceptual relation between the dwelling of a ruler and its inhabitant. What we have, therefore, is the conjunction of the two types of explanatory element, one empirical, the other conceptual. The first provides a hypothetical rationalization as to why the hieroglyph is to be understood as signifying *cosmos-ruler*, while the latter draws attention to the formal and semantic relations (between a serpent and the cosmos, a pharaoh and his royal abode) upon which the hypothetical rationalization is premised.

Both the glyphs and their meanings often display a composite structure formally supporting this analysis. The recognition that explanations are composite in this way, comprising discrete categorical elements, of why signs signifying their meanings and of what their meanings are, establishes not only that natural facts are conceived of as a hieroglyphic *resource*, but also that it is the semantic content of the glyph that provides the inferential warrant from that resource to an explanation of why the glyph has that particular semantic content. The explanatory momentum, in other words, is not from resource to meaning, but *vice versa*. Though the possibilities afforded by such a conception of *ἱερογλυφικά* are not explicitly exploited in the text of Book One, as an organizing principle it nonetheless constitutes a mnemonic *apparatus* for learning ‘hieroglyphic’ writing and a *technique* (explicitly employed in the second book) for generating further combinations derived from those resources.

A relatively direct statement of the means of composition occurs in 1.70 where the author notes that: ‘there are plenty of other signs in the nature of

crocodiles' (*Ἰκανῶν δὲ καὶ ἄλλων ὑπαρχόντων σημείων, ἐν τῇ τῶν κροκοδείλων φύσει*). There is no predetermined range of meanings in need of signs, nor any predetermined range of signs in need of meanings. Where the sign is of genuinely Egyptian provenance, its referent (and possibly its meaning) is sourced there, but it becomes apparent that Book Two is less rich in interpretative scope than its predecessor. The lines of thought connecting the explanation to the meaning are clearer because the convention of natural history adduced can be presented in order to establish the form of the sign, rather than Horapollo having to reconstruct a line of inference from a natural fact to an existing sign. If one is working from a resource stipulating a finite range of features pertaining to a zoomorphic referent, then a pre-existing sign or its given meaning may fall outside that range necessitating an imaginative or inventive reconstruction.

It is perhaps for that reason the average number of meanings per glyph in Book One is much greater than in Book Two. For fifty more signs (two-thirds as many again) in the second book, there are only fourteen more meanings (one-eighth as many again). This disparity between the two books then does seem likely to be a direct consequence of the method applied. The author of Book One must apply the zoological details of his Hellenistic-Alexandrian natural history sources to the glyphs of his Egyptian source without any guarantee that the two are complementary in the way the author of Book Two is at liberty to ensure. When providing the additional explanations of the second book the author-editor Philip, by virtue of being unconstrained by a pre-existing range of historically Egyptian hieroglyphs which are to be explained, is free to suggest new hieroglyphic signs on the basis of information from the natural history sources which can be used to explain how such new signs might have the meanings he attributes to them.

Even within this context, then, there are a number of distinct senses in which a sign might be thought of as signifying. In the first sense, we have *natural* signs, which are *symptomatic* of conditions, dispositions, or qualities that reside in the nature of the item depicted. These natural signs are, in the second sense, cited as explanations of the meanings of hieroglyphic signs, which are visual descriptions of natural signs, signifying that of which the latter are *symptomatic*.

Accordingly, the differences between the different senses of 'sign' are reflected in the terminology used to describe their respective functions. When the text states that a particular *σημεῖον* (hieroglyphic) *δηλοῖ* or *σημαίνει* its meaning, that sign is characterized as *indicative* of the meaning, not as *exhibiting* or *displaying* the quality (for example) which it means, as a natural *σημεῖον* does.

Inferential argumentation from the phenomena of the generated world hieroglyphic exegesis insofar as empirical observations explain *why* linguistic items bear the meanings they do, rather than license inferences about what they might mean.¹⁰⁴ The relation between sign and object depicted (and therefore referred to in explanation of the meaning of the sign) is not conceptually but parastatically¹⁰⁵ mediated, therefore the empirical veridicality of a predicable attribute in its application to the object depicted, explains not the meaning

of the glyph, but why it is the glyph bears the meaning it does. There is, then, no requirement for a commitment on Horapollo's part to an evidence-based inferential semantics in which it is the meanings of glyphs (or linguistic expressions more generally), rather than the reasons explaining why they do so, which are inferred.

I have argued that natural history cannot be used to explain *why* it is that certain hieroglyphic signs mean what they do (in the sense of providing a causal account of meaning), it can, however, be adduced to explain *that* the meanings of hieroglyphic signs are in fact what they are. If natural history has explanatory value in this second sense, is it not possible also to infer from natural history the significance of glyphs otherwise not understood? That is, can the understanding of the fact that certain linguistic items have known meanings (provided by a natural-historical resource such as Aristotle or Aelian) license an increasingly productive hermeneutic? In this case this would mean productive not as a means for discovering signs to bear pre-established meanings, but for establishing the meaning of pre-existing signs with previously unknown meanings (without, that is, thereby being committed to a causal account of meaning). The answer to this question again depends on the extent to which this further commits the exegete to the correspondence of the observations provided in explanation of hieroglyphs with factual conditions. If, that is, those observations are, at least in principle, falsifiable, the validity of the explanation of the meaning of signs may be thought susceptible to the critical objection mentioned earlier. If the observational evidence is susceptible of being falsified, any inference drawn from it lacks an intrinsic mark of veridicality. However, as we have seen, if on one hand the predictability of a given attribute to the item depicted were falsified, the semantic relation too would likely, but not necessarily, lapse. On the other hand, if the explanation of the meaning of a hieroglyphic sign is dependent upon the formal properties of the glyph itself – namely that it depicts such-and-such an item – it is the fact that the glyph shares attributes with the object so depicted that licenses the inference that its meaning can be explained in terms of those attributes.

It is possible then that meanings for new glyphs might be productively 'discoverable' in this way. This is supported by the fact that Philip's additions are no longer constrained by the predetermined features of genuinely Egyptian signs, thereby allowing for a diversification of natural features that constitute the possible semantic range of the hieroglyphic resource. However, a new corpus of pre-existing glyphs need not so readily lend itself to the specific type of explanation found in the passages that occupy the long Hellenizing sequence in Book Two. These constitute a kind of 'catalogue' of traits and occupations which brings emphasis to bear on key moral, social, and human themes relying on particularly *zoomorphic* signs. In this respect the catalogue is recognizably in the vein of the later tradition of *allegorical* and more clearly *emblematic* hieroglyphic exegeses.¹⁰⁶

[Πῶς ἄνθρωπον ἰατρεύοντα ἑαυτὸν ἀπὸ χρησμοῦ]. Ἄνθρωπον ἀπὸ χρησμοῦ ἰατρεύοντα ἑαυτὸν βουλόμενοι σημῆναι, φάσαν κρατοῦσαν

φύλλον δάφνης ζωγραφοῦσιν· ἐκείνη γάρ, ὅτε ἀρρωστεῖ, φύλλον ἐπιτίθῃσι δάφνης εἰς τὴν νεοσσιὰν ἑαυτῆς καὶ ὑγιαίνει.¹⁰⁷

[How a man who cures himself by an oracle]. When they want to signify a man who cures himself by an oracle, they depict a wood-pigeon carrying a laurel-branch; for this bird, when it is unwell, places a branch of laurel in its nest, and recovers.

So, for example, in 2.46, an *oracle* is to a *man* what a *laurel-leaf* is to a *dove*, i.e. a *cure*. A glyph depicting a dove carrying a laurel-leaf, by virtue of the curative properties of both laurel-leaves and oracles, signifies a man who cures himself by an oracle. Though it partly does so, the *cure* is not fully constitutive of the meaning of the glyph. The cure is the point of comparison that conceptually relates both the nominal elements of the meaning (the man and the oracle), as well as both the pictorial elements of the glyph itself (the wood-pigeon and the laurel branch). It is, however, fully explanatory of those elements of the meaning pictorially represented by the glyph.

The same structure is present in 2.49, where a *city* is to a *man dwelling safely* what a *stone* is to an *eagle's nest holding safely*, i.e. *security*. Therefore, a glyph of an eagle carrying a stone signifies a man who dwells securely in a city. Again, in 2.50: a (*long-eared feathered*) *bustard* is, *when a horse sees it*, what a *man* is, *when closely pursued by another*, i.e. *weak*. Therefore, a glyph of a bustard and a horse signifies a weak man persecuted by a stronger. Three things are established here: (i) that the *glyph* depicts a horse and a bustard; (ii) that the natural fact of a bustard taking flight on seeing a horse signifies weakness; and (iii) that the depiction of a bustard taking flight upon seeing a horse signifies the weakness of a man pursued by another. These three elements – sign, natural fact, and allusion – are significant in distinct senses. The glyph signifies the natural phenomenon descriptively; the natural phenomenon signifies the point of comparison symptomatically; the semantic link between the hieroglyphic sign and the natural phenomenon, i.e. *the weak confronted with the strong*, through the recontextualization of the sign from the perspective of natural history to that of ethics, signifies the allusive meaning of the glyph. In other words, had 2.50 read: ‘when they want to signify *the weak confronted with the strong*, they depict *a bustard in flight upon seeing a horse*’, there would be little if any grounds for doubt as to the appropriate analysis: the glyph is a depiction, or visual description, of a natural and typical indication of the meaning *the weak confronted with the strong*. Therefore, the natural reading may be reconstructed as follows: ‘when they want to signify a man in a weak condition and pursued by another (stronger) man [i.e. a particular instance of *the weak confronted with the strong*], they depict *a bustard in flight upon seeing* [because it is weaker than] *a horse*’.

Similarly, in 2.52, *flight* to a *featherless bat* is what a *headlong rush* is to a *weak man: rash*.

[Πῶς ἄνθρωπον δηλοῦσιν ἀσθενῆ καὶ προπετενόμενον]. Ἄνθρωπον ἀσθενῆ καὶ προπετενόμενον βουλόμενοι σημῆναι, νυκτερίδα ζωγραφοῦσιν· ἐκείνη γάρ, μὴ ἔχουσα πτερὰ, ἵπταται.¹⁰⁸

[How they show a man who is weak and hasty]. When they want to signify a man who is weak and hasty, they depict a bat, for it flies without having any feathers.

It is more difficult to read 2.48 in this way.

[Πῶς ἄνδρα μὴ ἔχοντα χολήν, ἀλλ' ἀφ' ἑτέρου δεχόμενον]. Ἄνδρα μὴ ἔχοντα χολήν αὐτοφυῶς, ἀλλ' ἀφ' ἑτέρου δεχόμενον γράφοντες, περιστερὰν ζωγραφοῦσιν, ἔχουσιν τὰ ὀπίσθια ὀρθά· ἐν ἐκείνοις γὰρ τὴν χολήν ἔχει.¹⁰⁹

[How a man who has no bile but receives it from another]. When they write a man who has no bile spontaneously, but receives it from another, they depict a dove with its hind parts upright; for it has the bile in these.

A man without bile naturally is, when receiving it from another, what a dove is, with upright hind-parts, in which it has bile. In other words, a man not inclined to anger naturally, but who is incited to anger by another is to be compared to a dove which (1.57) is not choleric, but has bile in its tail,¹¹⁰ which it generically holds erect (indicating the presence of the otherwise foreign bile?).

The sequence continues with 2.53. Here, only the barest distinction between 'meaning/showing' and 'writing/depicting' is observed (. . . βουλόμενοι ζωγραφήσαι, . . . ζωγραφοῦσιν), marked solely by aspect.

[Πῶς γυναῖκα θηλάζουσιν, καὶ καλῶς ἀνατρέφουσιν]. Γυναῖκα θηλάζουσιν, καὶ καλῶς ἀνατρέφουσιν βουλόμενοι ζωγραφήσαι, νυκτερίδα πάλιν ἔχουσιν ὀδόντας καὶ μαστοὺς ζωγραφοῦσιν· αὕτη γάρ, μόνη τῶν ἄλλων πτηνῶν, ὀδόντας καὶ μαστοὺς ἔχει.¹¹¹

[How a woman suckling and bringing up her children well]. When they want to write a woman suckling and bringing up her children well, they again depict a bat with teeth and breasts; for this is the only one of the winged creatures which has teeth and breasts.

The sense of the elements themselves: *teeth* and *breasts* are to a *bat* what *suckling* is to a woman (i.e. tokens of *good-nursing*) provides an equally minimal distinction to the referents of sign and meaning, and the overall contribution is little more than the alignment of *bat* and *woman*, neither foregrounded in such a way as to specify the priority of one over the other, except by the aspect-marker: they *imperfectively* depict a *bat*, when they *perfectively* want to depict a *woman* etc. Other sections, on the other hand, use the *imperfective* in both clauses.

The unique contribution of these kinds of exegeses in the *Hieroglyphica* was recognized by Champollion himself:

il est aisé de voir que l'ouvrage d'Horapollon se rapporte bien plus spécialement à l'explication des images dont se composaient les anaglyphs, qu'aux elements ou caractères de l'écriture hiéroglyphiques proprement

dite: le titre si vague de ce livre, *Ἱερογλυφικά* [sculptures sacrées ou gravures sacrées], est la seule cause de la méprise.¹¹²

In the context of a discussion of Clement of Alexandria's treatment of hieroglyphic Egyptian Vergote¹¹³ offers several possible explanations for the distinctive characteristics of *ἀνάγλυφα* (i.e. ornaments or inscriptions carved in low relief) used in theologized myths in the praises of kings employing details of Egyptian orthography, which appeal to morpho-syntactically marked hieroglyphic practice, *contra* the explanations of his predecessors, Maréstaing, Dulaurier, and Deiber. The latter had, by contrast, conceived of these anaglyphs as exhibiting formal differences associated with glyphic practice in bas-reliefs in particular, in which not all that is depicted is grammatically marked script, but includes the depiction of items as compositional elements in scenic tableaux without playing a specifically morpho-phonological or morpho-syntactic role. In this respect his predecessors were undoubtedly closer to the mark.

The Greek conception of hieroglyphs in general, standing in need of interpretation (*ἐρμηνεία*), and Horapollon's conception of allusive hieroglyphs in particular, is exactly the situation we are faced with in the tableaux of Egyptian bas-reliefs. The relationship between the two elements of script and tableau is characterized by the fact that the script supplies the interpretation of the tableau; the relationship between glyph and explanation in the exegetical sources is characterized by the fact that it is the explanation that supplies the interpretation of the glyph. Both may fairly be described as allegorical principally because the glyphs for which the Greek exegesis supplies the interpretation are not semantically determined according to the same principles as the morpho-syntactically marked Greek sequences. Neither the script in the tableaux, nor the explanation in the exegeses themselves is subject to further interpretation. That is because the Greek exegesis is not susceptible of interpretation precisely insofar as it serves as the explanation of the meaning of the glyph and not as itself signifying it.

The contention here, however, is not to deny the Horapollonian glyphs the status of hieroglyphic writing on the grounds that they resemble historically Egyptian anaglyphs more than the phonetic and ideographic models of decipherment. Allusive Horapollonian hieroglyphs are rather to be explained as allusions precisely in virtue of being mimetic signs depicting referents which are specifically capable of use allusively, in the context of the particular aims and structural elements of the text, because presented as bearing semantic content. That is, against a background of what might be called the *natural language of signs*, the hieratic intent of the glyphs not only does not preclude them from semantic analysis, but in fact depends on that very possibility.

Such a language has occupied prominent positions in philosophical linguistics in more than one historical setting, but is ultimately a Greek conception. The signs, insofar as they are signs at all, must be capable of being understood, which of course means they are also capable of being misunderstood, which is

why their applications, their uses, are dependent on the explanations provided. The use of a glyph to *signify* a quality (see the non-Egyptian material informing most of Book Two), *tropologically* is nonetheless distinct from the use of the same glyph as alluding to that quality by means of a comparative juxtaposition of, for example, natural and moral realms of thought, which is the manner in which what Horapollo describes as *allusive* hieroglyphs signify their meaning.

The aims and presuppositions of the *Hieroglyphica* differ not in detail, but in kind from the endeavour of decipherment. The unique and original contribution of the text is precisely the technique for producing either a sign-resource, or a range of tropic significance, through natural facts used to define semantic content. Dempsey in Merkel and Debus¹¹⁴ misconstrues the importance of this point while simultaneously making several crucial observations on the development of Renaissance interest in hieroglyphics. Wishing to ease the emphasis placed on the Horapollo manuscripts in explanation of later developments in the area, he writes that the *Hieroglyphica* ‘contained no statement of the linguistic or pictographic principles of hieroglyphs, no grammar or syntax’. On one hand, as demonstrated earlier, the informing linguistic principles are embedded in the structure of the work; the meaning of a sign is circumscribed by the account given of it, not by otherwise unstated grammatical considerations. On the other hand, there does appear to be some basis upon which to attribute to Horapollo an elementary conception of hieroglyphic grammar in the availability of a number of compound signs:

- 1.1 ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην (sun and moon)
- 1.12 κάνθαρον καὶ γῦπα (beetle [scarab] and vulture)
- 1.22 θυμιατήριον καίόμενον καὶ ἐπάνω καρδίαν (burning censer and heart above it)
- 1.27 γλῶσσαν καὶ χεῖρα ὑποκάτω (tongue and a hand beneath)
- 1.38 μέλαν καὶ κόσκινον καὶ σχοινίον (ink and sieve and reed)
- 1.43 πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ (fire and water)
- 1.59 ὄφιν κοσμοειδῶς ἐσχηματισμένον, οὗ τὴν οὐρὰν ἐν τῷ στόματι, τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τοῦ βασιλέως ἐν μέσῳ τῷ εἰλίγματι (serpent represented as cosmos, with its tail in its mouth and name of king written in middle of coils)
- 1.61 ὄφιν ἐν μέσῳ δὲ αὐτοῦ οἶκον μέγαν (serpent and in middle great palace)
- 2.35 σκορπίον καὶ κροκόδειλον (a scorpion and a crocodile)
- 2.43 ὠτίδα καὶ ἵππον (a horse and a bustard)
- 2.51 στρουθὸν καὶ γλαῦκα (a sparrow and an owl)
- 2.64 μύρμηκα καὶ πτερὰ νυκτερίδος (an ant and bat’s wings)
- 2.74 λύκον καὶ λίθον (a wolf and a stone)
- 2.75 λέοντας καὶ δαῖδας (lions and torches)
- 2.85 ἐλέφαντα καὶ κριὸν (an elephant and a ram)
- 2.86 ἐλέφαντα μετὰ χοίρου (an elephant with a pig)
- 2.87 ἔλαφον καὶ ἔχιδναν (a deer and a viper)
- 2.91 ἔλαφον μετὰ αὐλητοῦ ἀνθρώπου (a deer and a flute-player)

- 2.93 ἔποπα καὶ ἀδίαντον τὴν βοτάνην (a hoopoe and some maiden-hair)
 2.106 κάραβον καὶ πολύποδα (a spiny lobster and an octopus)
 2.108 πίνναν καὶ καρκίνον μικρὸν (an oyster and a crab)

Several elements of these do have semantic content in isolation, ‘moon’, ‘scarab’, and ‘serpent’, for example.¹¹⁵ Also, the juxtaposition of independently meaningful elements with other elements (whose meaning is not on the whole otherwise specifically explained), does seem to entail some form of operative grammatical distinction, either as a form of morphological inflection, or in terms of syntactical/clausal construction. The clearest example of this is the ‘moon’ hieroglyph, which in isolation means ‘month’ and in combination with the ‘sun’ hieroglyph means ‘eternity’. It is difficult to envisage here the addition of the ‘sun’ hieroglyph as performing any determinately morphological, as opposed to syntactical work. The addition of the ‘sun’ glyph appears to establish a syntactical relation since it functions at the very least as a semantically *external* modifier of the meaning of the ‘moon’ glyph. However, the modification it entails clearly belongs to the same semantic field as the ‘moon’ glyph in isolation (i.e. both ‘head’ and modifier have a temporal meaning). In that sense the connection between ‘moon’ and ‘sun and moon’ correlates better with that between ‘moon’ and ‘month’, than between ‘moon’ and ‘moons’. Whether construed as a morphological or a syntactic feature, however, compositionality of glyphs in Horapollo evidently is capable of marking semantic variation and to that extent (however underdeveloped in the text) exhibits grammaticality.

The use of natural signs in this way, as a semiotic resource, itself, however, indicates an underlying principle of exegetic judgement whereby hieroglyphic signs are semantically analogous to natural signs. The agreement in significance between the formal properties of the glyph and the predicable properties of the item depicted without corresponding intermediate instances establishes those properties themselves as both factual and logical conditions under which hieroglyphs are capable of the third, allusive mode of expression. To predicate of a serpent, or the glyph of a serpent, that it is smooth or speckled is to describe the natural properties of the creature; to explain the meaning of a serpent-sign by reference to smoothness or speckling is to define the use of that sign as a precondition for its predicative use in reference to natural facts. What is almost completely absent in the *Hieroglyphica* is any broader linguistic context. For example, no single full hieroglyphic inscription is adduced which might be examined in the light of its exegeses, and consequently no grammaticalized uses of a hieroglyphic sign is in evidence.

The status of the natural fact as such is not, semantically speaking, relevant to the viability of the hieroglyphic sign in its allusive sense. Cats, for example, do not always land on their feet after a fall, but the currency of the notion legitimizes the picture of a cat landing on its feet as a sign of stability or balance. Philip might have written in this case: when they want to signify a man who regains his balance after losing it, they depict a cat, for a cat, when it falls, lands on its feet. On this reading of allusive glyphs, the claim that hieroglyphic sign of

a sparrow on fire (2.115) is used to mean a fecund man, can be restated as: the sign depicts a natural indication of fecundity.

Read purely as a *catalogue of signs*, the *Hieroglyphica* merely notes that they depict certain natural signs and can therefore be used with this kind of broader semantic range. It is evident that what we have in the text is not an attempt to *decipher* the historical values of Egyptian hieroglyphics, but an attempt to *interpret* the meanings of hieroglyphic signs by means of natural signs. An investigation to determine the extent of the influence of Aristotelian natural history on the structure of the *Hieroglyphica*, except insofar as this might further support observations on categorically composite elements (see earlier on 2.38), or on inherited paradoxography (2.48), as source-analysis will provide only a reconstruction of an historical line of development of philosophical linguistics. It will not provide a clarification of the conditions under which it is presented in Horapollo and the conditions are precisely those which juxtapose hieroglyphic signs and natural signs.

Notes

- 1 This possibility is marked by Clement's distinction between two forms of 'epistolographic' (ἐπιστολογραφικός) Egyptian at *Stromata* 5.4.20.3, though not, it seems, by Porphyry at *Vita Pythagorae* 11.9–12.4.
- 2 For which see Lorenzo Pignoria, *Vetustissimae tabulae explicatio* (Venice: Giovanni Antonio Rampazetti, 1605) and Kircher's mid-17th century Egyptological works. Despite further a handful of retrospective rehabilitations (see especially Leemans (1835), Van de Walle and Vergote (1943, 1947) and Sbordone (2002)), the 'imaginative folly' and 'fruitless speculations' of Kircher from 1636 for the next thirty or so years have generally been considered irredeemable by modern Egyptology.
- 3 According to the biography of Champollion in the Egyptian newspaper *الأهرام* / ('al-'ahrām) in the centenary year of decipherment.
- 4 Even the Greek on the Rosetta stone was likely translated from Egyptian into Greek by an Egyptian.
- 5 Herodotus, *Historiae* 2.125. See Harrison, T., 'Herodotus' Conception of Foreign Languages' in *Histos*, Vol. 2 (March, 1998): pp. 1–45.
- 6 Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 10.
- 7 Diogenes Laërtius, *Vita philosophorum* 8.3.
- 8 E.g. *πίρωμις* in Egyptian is *καλός κάγαθός* in Greek (Herodotus, *Historiae* 2.143.4); the transcription of the name 'Ozymandias' (Diodorus Siculus); Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* pass.
- 9 Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 7.56.
- 10 Herodotus, *Historiae* 2.36 and Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica* 1.81.4. Both cited in Maréstaing, P., *Les Écritures Égyptiennes et l'Antiquité Classique* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1913). There is in general a limited range of Greek and Roman terms for a hieroglyphic sign: *σημεῖον*-*signum*; *γράμματα*-*literae*; *σύμβολον*; *σχῆμα*; *ἱερογλυφικά*; *figura*; *species*; *simulacrum*; *ἀγάλματα*.
- 11 Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 6.353B and 10.354E, amongst which he recognized an alphabet of twenty-five characters. Cf. also Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 7.57: cited in Maréstaing (1913).
- 12 Champollion, *Grammaire Égyptienne* (Paris: Didot, 1836): p. 2.
- 13 See e.g. Deiber, A., *Clément d'Alexandrie et l'Égypte* (Cairo: l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1904) and Van de Walle, B. and Vergote, J., (1943) and (1947); both pay particular attention to the passage from Clement in this context.

- 14 See Gardiner (1927): p. 11, noted earlier.
- 15 Deiber, A., *Clément d'Alexandrie et l'Égypte* (Cairo: l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1904).
- 16 Vergote, J., 'Clément d'Alexandrie et l'écriture égyptienne' in *Le Muséon*, Vol. 52 (1939): pp. 199–221.
- 17 Sbordone, F., (ed.), *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Naples: Georg Olms, 2002 [2nd edn]).
- 18 Gardiner, Sir A. H., *Egyptian Grammar* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927): p. 23 and note.
- 19 See Fox, M. V., 'Egyptian Onomastica and Biblical Wisdom' in *Vetus Testamentum*, Vol. 36, Fasc. 3 (July, 1986): pp. 302–310.
- 20 Specifically, they were used to teach logograms and ideographic determinatives.
- 21 Cf. also the mediaeval Graeco-Coptic *scalae*, or topical word-lists.
- 22 Kramer, J., *Glossaria bilinguia altera* (C. Gloss. Biling. II). *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete*, Beiheft 8 (München and Leipzig: Saur, 2001).
- 23 Cribiore, R., 'Review of *Glossaria bilinguia altera* (C. Gloss. Biling. II). *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete*, Beiheft 8 by Johannes Kramer' in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (May 8, 2002) [URL: <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2002/2002-05-08.html> accessed August 7th 2017].
- 24 Sluiter, I., 'The Dialectics of Genre: Some Aspects of Secondary Literature and Genre in Antiquity' in Depew, M., and Obbink, D., (eds.), *Matrices of Genre: Authors, Canons, and Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000): pp. 183–203.
- 25 Sluiter (2000): p. 183.
- 26 Callimachus arranges 'registers' or 'tables' of individuals and their works either by *genre* or professional affiliation.
- 27 Sluiter (2000): pp. 198–199.
- 28 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.t.5.
- 29 Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rerum gestarum libri* 17.4; 22.15.
- 30 Cf. Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 3.220 ff.; Tacitus, *Annales* 11.14; Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 11.22: cited in Maréstaing (1913).
- 31 See Dionysius Thrax, *Fragmenta* 52.1–20 = Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.8.45.4.
- 32 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.20.1–21.4 and 5.7.41.1–43.3.
- 33 Additional reflections by Clement on the relative capacities of the Greek and Egyptian languages for expressing philosophical truth are also found at *Stromata* 1.21.143.6 and 6.4.35–37.1.
- 34 Ultimately, a similarly inexact model is still a basic pedagogical tool for learners of hieroglyphic Egyptian.
- 35 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.4.35.2.
- 36 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.4.35–37. The remaining six books are medical.
- 37 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.4.35–37.
- 38 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.4.37.3.2–3.
- 39 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.4.36.1.1–8.
- 40 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.20.3–21.3.
- 41 For that reason the summary conclusions are presented 'cold' here and will be argued in detail elsewhere.
- 42 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.20.3.
- 43 Vergote (1939): 'le rapprochement *hpr(r)* "scarabée" – "soleil" existe uniquement dans l'idée des Égyptiens' (p. 217).
- 44 Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.21.2.
- 45 But see especially Vergote (1939) cited earlier for a counterpoint to this tendency.
- 46 Some are genuinely straightforward: spelling, for example. Others are exceedingly complex, as, for example, the 'sportive' writing of certain Ptolemaic texts.
- 47 In the present context, the important feature is the particular Egyptian provenance of the notion of hieroglyphs embodying wisdom. Wisdom literature as such is not conceived of as a collection of adages and homilies intended exclusively as instruction on the ways

and means of life in accordance with *mṣṣt* (truth, justice), but ought to exemplify the principles it espouses. The idea at stake (in wisdom as textual tradition), is that ensures its transmission precisely because in preserved (i.e. written) form. Wisdom does not stand at a remove from the text of which it is the subject. Even as the theme of the literature surrounding it, wisdom is part of the structure of that literature, not merely a decorative addition. In Plotinus' account, an individual hieroglyph stands in the same unmediated relation to the wisdom after which it is fashioned. The broader conception of hieroglyphic Egyptian as the textual tradition of recorded 'perfect speech' (*mdt-nfrt*), capable of a divine 'power' (*^δύναμις^*) missing in Greek, is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 4, section 4.2.

- 48 It may be helpful in this context to think of hieroglyphs each as one of several thousand playing cards in a hieroglyphic deck: each card has a face value – how the face values of cards in this hieroglyphic deck are played, however, necessitates an explanation of the rules of any game played with them.
- 49 Athanassiadi, P., *Damascius: The Philosophical History Text With Translation and Notes* (Athens: Apamea, 1999): pp. 72–73.
- 50 Cf. Chaeremon, *Fragmenta* 12 (= Joannes Tzetzes, *Exegesis in Iliadem* 1.97) and Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.3, 7, 10, 19, 25, 62, 169; fragm. 17D = Porphyry, *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων* fragm. 10 (= Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.11.45–13.2) and Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.169; fragm. 19D (= Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.7.41–43) and Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.44; fragm. 20D (= Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.20.3–21.3) and Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.10.
- 51 Plotinus' extended commentary on *Phaedrus* 246d–247e in Treatise V of the *Enneades*, also explicitly appealing to hieroglyphic Egyptian, will further serve more clearly to orient a discussion of the philosophical foundations of Horapollo's metaphysics.
- 52 Damascius, *Vita Isidori* (ap. Sudam, Hesychium, Photium et e cod. Vat. 1950) (Epitoma Photiana 243) 80.1–4.
- 53 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.82.
- 54 Van Bakkum, W., Houben, J., Sluiter, I., and Versteegh, K., *The Emergence of Semantics in Four Linguistic Traditions, Hebrew, Sanskrit, Greek, Arabic* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1997): p. 185.
- 55 Linke, K., *Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Dionysios Thrax* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977): pp. 30–31 and notes.
- 56 Dyck, A. R., 'Review of Die Fragmente des Grammatikers Dionysios Thrax by Konstanze Linke, Die Fragmente der Grammatiker Tyrannion und Diokles by Walter Haas, and Apions Glossai Homerikai by Susanne Neitzel' in *Classical Philology*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (July, 1982): pp. 270–277. See esp. Dionysius Thrax, *Fragmenta* 52.1–20 = Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.8.45.4: Ἀλλὰ καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ Θραῶν ὁ γραμματικὸς ἐν τῷ Περὶ τῆς ἐμφάσεως περὶ τοῦ τῶν τροχίσκων συμβόλου φησὶ κατὰ λέξιν· “ἐσήμαινον γοῦν οὐ διὰ λέξεως μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ συμβόλων ἔνιοι τὰς πράξεις, διὰ λέξεως μὲν ὡς ἔχει τὰ λεγόμενα Δελφικὰ παραγγέλματα, τὸ ‘μηδὲν ἄγαν’ καὶ τὸ ‘γινῶθι σαυτὸν’ καὶ τὰ τούτοις ὅμοια, διὰ δὲ συμβόλων ὡς ὁ τε τροχὸς ὁ στρεφόμενος ἐν τοῖς τῶν θεῶν τεμένεσιν εἰλκυσμένος παρὰ Αἰγυπτίων καὶ τὸ τῶν θαλλῶν τῶν διδομένων τοῖς προσκυνοῦσι”. Cf. the dual role as ἐρμηνεύματα and συνθήματα of certain of the Greek magical papyri, in this latter respect particularly, may point to an Egyptian precursor. Cf. PGM II, ll. 17–20; PGM III, l. 701; PGM IV, l. 945.
- 57 See Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica* (lib. 1–20) 3.3.5.
- 58 Apart from issues of translation arising from the use of loan-words, and issues of ritual power in the alternation between Egyptian and Greek in the PGM and PDM, cf., e.g. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.7.41.2.1–2: Ὅμοια γοῦν τοῖς Ἑβραϊκοῖς κατὰ γε τὴν ἐπίκρυψιν καὶ τὰ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων αἰνίγματα; the distinction conferred upon the king whereby he had access to the secret teachings of the priests is also the topic of Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 9.354 B–C: τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἐπικεκρυμμένης τὰ πολλά.

- 59 Corpus Hermeticum, *Ὅροι Ἀσκληπιοῦ πρὸς Ἀμμωνα βασιλέα* 1.5–2.13.
- 60 Copenhaver, B. P., *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius* in a new English translation, with notes and introduction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): p. 58.
- 61 Similar observations are made in Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 10.354E27–F3: τῶν γὰρ καλουμένων ἱερογλυφικῶν γραμμάτων οὐθεν ἀπολείπει τὰ πολλὰ τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν παραγγελμάτων.
- 62 Copenhaver, B. P., *Hermetica: The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius* in a new English translation, with notes and introduction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): pp. 201–202.
- 63 Copenhaver notes (p. 168) the reading ἰδύναμις is recommended by the *testimonium* of Nicephorus Gregoras, *Rerum Nat.* (reported by Scott) despite Nock's conjecture: ἡχώ.
- 64 Cf. Origen, *Contra Celsum* 5.45.7 ff.
- 65 PDM xiv (P. Lugd. Bat. J 383 = Anastasi 65; P Lond. demot. 10070 = Anastasi 1072), ll. 93–114.
- 66 See PGM II, ll. 17–20; PGM III, l. 701; PGM IV, l. 945.
- 67 PGM XII, col. XII, ll. 402–409.
- 68 PDM xiv. ll. 117–149.
- 69 Johnson, J. H., in Betz, H. D., *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1986): p. 22, n. 77.
- 70 Note also 'the holy symbols of the cosmic elements' (τὰ ἱερὰ τῶν κοσμικῶν στοιχείων σύμβολα) at Corpus Hermeticum, *Fragmenta* 23.7.7.
- 71 Terian, A., *Philonis Alexandrini De Animalibus* (Studies in Hellenistic Judaism 1) (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1981).
- 72 'The many verbal agreements between Horapollo and the *Physiologus* must have led Sbordone to the erroneous conclusion that the former of these was indebted to the latter, had he not known that Horapollo got most of his stuff from Apion-Chaeremon.' Perry, B. E., 'Review of *Physiologus* by F. Sbordone' in *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (1937): pp. 488–496.
- 73 Leemans, C., (ed.), *Horapollonis Niloi Hieroglyphica* (Amsterdam: J. Müller et Socios, 1835): pp. 117–404.
- 74 See Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): p. xxi.
- 75 Scott, A., 'The Date of the *Physiologus*' in *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Nov., 1998): pp. 430–441.
- 76 Thompson, D. W., 'Review of *Physiologus* by Francesco Sbordone' in *The Classical Review*, Vol. 52, No. 5 (Nov., 1938): pp. 182–183.
- 77 Sbordone, F., *Physiologus* (Rome: Dante Alighieri-Albrighi, Segati, 1936; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1976). See also Lantschoot, A. van, 'À propos du *Physiologus*' in Malinine, M., (ed.), *Coptic Studies in Honor of Walter Ewing Crum* (Boston: Byzantine Institute of America, 1950): pp. 339–363; Bourget, P. du, 'Diatribes de Chenouté contre le démon' in *Société d'archéologie copte*, Bulletin 16 (1961–1962): p. 21.
- 78 Εἰζμοος ἀνοκ ριχνογτοογ = *As I Sat on a Mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?) = cod. A (HB 261: 1.5–268), cod. B (XN 227–240), cod. C (XN 259–270), cod. D (HB 305–306) = No. 18 (pp. 44–62), *Ad philosophum gentilem*. Leipoldt, J., with the assistance of Crum, W. E., *Sinuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia*. [3 volumes (numbered 1, 3, and 4)] (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, volumes 41, 42, and 73 (Copt. 1 [= 2.2.T], 2 [= 2.4.T], 5 [= 2.5.T])) (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1906–1913). See the following sections for more detail on the Shenoutean corpus.
- 79 Eco, U., *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995) and *Serendipities Language and Lunacy* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999).

- 80 The *Hieroglyphica* does not represent a movement towards the hieroglyphic *system* of Champollion, but towards the hieroglyphic *technique* of Colonna, Bellini, and Dürer.
- 81 These include nine nouns, seven zero-prefixed (γενεά, γένεσις, γενέτειρα, γέννησις, γένος, γονεύς, γόνος) plus two prefixed (ἀρχαιογονία, συγγένεια); seven adjectives, two zero-prefixed (γεννητικός, γόνιμος) plus five prefixed (ἄγονος, ἄρρενογόνος, αὐτογενής, μονογενής, πολύγονος); and five verbs, three zero-prefixed (γεννάω, γίγνομαι, γονάω) plus two prefixed (παραγίγνομαι, περιγίγνομαι).
- 82 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.44 [Πῶς δηλοῦσι σφῆκας].
- 83 See Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): p. xlv.
- 84 Plato, *Cratylus* 426c–427c.
- 85 Plato, *Cratylus* 386d–397b. See Sedley, D., *Plato's Cratylus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), ch.6, §2.
- 86 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.70.1–6.
- 87 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.2. [Πῶς κόσμον]. Alternatively, by virtue of sharing identically predicable attributes in an extended discursive sense (in this case, cyclical temporality), a serpent-sign can be also used to mean ‘cosmos’. This extended sense is the subject of the following chapters.
- 88 See especially Allen, J., *Inference From Signs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).
- 89 Aristotle, *De generatione et corruptione* 324a9–11. Cf. Aristotle, *De anima* 418a3–6; 429a13–18; 430a3–4; 417b16–19.
- 90 Aristotle, *De interpretatione*, 16a3–8.
- 91 Charles argues that this distinction between conventional symbols and non-conventional likenesses represents an attempt to remedy a confusion of two separate strands in the *Cratylus* (cf. 386c ff. and 430d5 ff.). See Charles, D., ‘Aristotle on Names and Their Signification’ in Everson, S., (ed.), *Companions to Ancient Thought: 3 Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994): pp. 37–73, esp. p. 41 and note 8.
- 92 See Aristotle, *Analytica Posteriora* 92b26–27.
- 93 Cf. Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea* 2.2, 1104a13–14; *Ethica Eudemia* 1.6, 1216b26–28.
- 94 Cf. an example of inference on a similarly natural theme at Aristotle, *Analytica Priora* 70a10 ff.
- 95 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.10.
- 96 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.32.
- 97 The structural switch can perhaps more plausibly explained than by reference to their being sourced ‘from other copies’ (ἃ δὲ καὶ ἐξ ἄλλων ἀντιγράφων) by supposing a corresponding shift in editorial method, namely, to the invention hieroglyphs whose meanings can then be explained by reference to pre-existing zoological observations.
- 98 Sbordone, F., *Hori Apollonis Hieroglyphica* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2002 [2nd edn]): p. 53.
- 99 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.34.
- 100 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.38.
- 101 According to the LSJ: ‘in Il. always of the darkness of death’.
- 102 This is brought out in the Greek by the words πῦρ and πυρέττειν; in English perhaps *flame/enflame, blaze/blaze up, or flare, flare up* (the operative notion being a self-propagating nature common to both fire and immeasurable or *extreme* anger).
- 103 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.61.
- 104 As we shall see, it is also a key concern of Neoplatonic exegetical procedures via analysis to intelligible first principles.
- 105 See *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.57.20–29 and 4.1.58.4–6 cited earlier.
- 106 Within which tradition the *Hieroglyphica*, *Sive De Sacris Aegyptiorum aliarumque gentium litteris* of Giampietro Valeriano Bolzani (Basel: Michael Isengrin, 1556) and *Emblematum libellus* by Giovanni Andrea Alciato (Augsburg: Heinrich Steiner, 1531) are early successors of Horapollo.

- 107 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.46.
- 108 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.52.
- 109 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.48.
- 110 Cf. Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* 2.15.
- 111 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.53.
- 112 Cited in Sbordone (2002): p. xi.
- 113 Vergote, J., 'Clément d'Alexandrie et l'écriture égyptienne' in *Le Muséon*, Vol. 52 (1939): pp. 199–221; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.21.1.
- 114 Merkel, I., and Debus, A. G., (eds.), *Hermeticism and the Renaissance Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe* (London: Folger Books, 1988).
- 115 E.g. 'moon' 1.4, 66; 'scarab' 1.10, 2.41; 'serpent' 1.45, 60, 62, 63, 64.

4 Divine symbols

This chapter looks at the possibility of reading the *Hieroglyphica* in a context contemporary with its composition. In that contemporary context certain elements of both the thematic content and the methodological alignments discussed in Chapter 3 are brought into sharper, in fact polemical focus. In particular the focus will be on the vantage-point afforded by an account of the tensions between a vein of contemporary pagan allegoristic and metaphysical thought in opposition to the Christian response to hieroglyphic Egyptian, each of which, as such, were engaged in a late echo of the polemic of pagan resistance movement in 4th and earlier 5th century Egypt.¹

4.1 The Christian-pagan controversy

After a brief look, therefore, at a few background details concerning the Coptic language and its literary legacy, I will outline some of the features of the escalating tensions and subsequent concordat between Christian and pagan factions in later antiquity that might shed light not only on the possible circumstances of the text's composition, but also on one or two major theoretical concerns informing the divide between the two parties that will inform the discussion of the logical and metaphysical background to the Neoplatonic appropriation of hieroglyphic Egyptian.

Despite the Coptic designation of the pagans as *νηελλην*, it cannot be maintained that the Christian-pagan divide had fallen along linguistic lines. While Greek-language education separated the intellectual and aristocratic classes of Upper Egypt from the generally Coptic-speaking population whose allegiances naturally lay with Pachomius, Shenoute, and their successors, Shenoute himself, for example, was bilingual. Nonetheless this section focuses on the *corpora* Coptic-language texts representing some of the major sources for both the Christian polemic against the pagans and for 'Gnostic' tendencies within the Coptic and the Greek sources.

Coptic, also known as Neo-Egyptian, is the last phase of the Egyptian language. It was in spoken use throughout Egypt from perhaps the 1st century B.C. until the end of the 10th century A.D. with pockets of learned Coptic use

surviving into the 18th century. Varieties of Coptic can be distinguished historically, geographically, and linguistically.

The language is attested in three geographically distinct dialect groups of varying historical longevity: (i) Upper, (ii) Middle, and (iii) Lower Egyptian, comprising (i) (a) Sahidic = Sa'idic = Thebaic (3rd to 14th centuries), (b) Akhmimic, and the sub-dialect (c) Lycopolitan = Subakhmimic = Assiutic (4th to 5th centuries); (ii) (a) Fayyumic = Faiyumic = Bashmuric (3rd to 10th centuries) and (b) Oxyrhynchite = Mesokemic (4th to 5th centuries); and (iii) Bohairic = Memphitic (4th to 17th centuries).

The Coptic lexicon is composed of both Egyptian Coptic and Graeco-Coptic items. The standard reference dictionary records 3,308 Egyptian Coptic entries (not including innumerable derived forms – Coptic is a polysynthetic language).² The extent of Greek borrowings into Coptic is undetermined; estimates range from 20% of the vocabulary to as many as 4,000 loans.³ Cherix' provisional edition of the *Index grec-copte* (2010) lists perhaps 1,000 Greek entries (including derived forms);⁴ Förster's *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in koptischen dokumentarischen Texten* (2002) lists 2,500.⁵ In the 10th and 11th centuries, Coptic also acquires Arabic loans (perhaps 500 items).⁶ Syntactically Greek has no influence on Coptic and semantic variation occurs even in cases of borrowed lexical items.

The oldest Coptic texts, written as early as the 1st century B.C. and as late as the 5th century A.D. (but primarily between the 1st and 3rd centuries) are the Old Coptic magical texts. Shortly thereafter (between the 2nd and 4th centuries) appear the first translations of the bible into Coptic, contemporary with Gnostic and Gnostic-Christian works. At the end of the 3rd century Manichaean texts begin to be translated into Coptic, at which point appear the patristic translations, apocrypha, and homilies.

Coptic literature proper – i.e. non-magical, untranslated texts, originally composed in Coptic – begins in the 3rd and 4th centuries with Hierax, Pachomius, Antony, Shenoute, and Besa. There follows the polemical literature after Chalcedon and Damianus until the Arab conquest. The classical period of the patristic translations and hagiographic literature (8th to 12th centuries) is contemporary with the cyclical panegyrica and *vitae*, which are succeeded by the synaxarial systematization.⁷

Shenoute (c. 346–466 A.D., *scrib.* 388–466 A.D.) was the archimandrite of the White Monastery in Atriye (opposite Panopolis – modern Akhmim – on the western Nile), which was responsible for mounting an attack on the otherwise unknown local deity Petbe.⁸ He also organized the destruction of the remaining pagan temple in Atriye,⁹ whose adherents had in the preceding half-century maintained a vigorous resistance to the advancing Christian influence.¹⁰ At one point the archimandrite and two brother monks travelled 'in secrecy by night' to the house of Gessius in Šmin (downriver from the White Monastery), entered, and removed 'idols', which they took to the riverside and destroyed.¹¹ Gessius is the addressee of several of Shenoute's works. He may be

the same iatro-philosopher at whose house Heraiscus sheltered upon his release from similar persecution.¹²

The other main Coptic-language resource for present purposes is the Nag'–Hammâdi corpus. The library of thirteen codices consists of fifty-three treatises of a broadly Gnostic character, discovered near ancient Chenoboskion on the west bank of the Nile in Upper Egypt. The treatises are neither uniform in scholastic character, nor attributable as a whole to any group unified along principled doctrinal lines, which is to say it is a syncretic collection.¹³ Various typologies emerge, both in terms of dialect and doctrinal affiliation. Most of the texts are in Sahidic, though often display a Subakhmimic colouring (the dialect used for the remaining texts). Many are Christian, mostly Gnosticizing (though not exclusively); others are not; nor does the distinction map neatly onto sub-classifications. Apart from Platonist and Hermetic treatises, there appear a large number of Sethian (or Ophite) texts, and a comparably large number of Valentinian texts, as well as Thomasine and Basilidian examples.

This complex of scholastic divisions and the syncretistic overlappings poses several major methodological problems. Shenoute is unquestionably writing within Pachomian Coptic Christian doctrinal parameters. The affiliations of his polemical targets and those of the various texts of the Nag'–Hammâdi corpus are considerably less clear. The Melitians (anti-Athanasian schismatics), Origenists (subordinationist Christologists, though they were also contested on other grounds), and Arians (heteroousians) are specifically singled out as antagonists in Shenoute. We also know that Shenoute was familiar with Thomasine presentations of gospel sayings and perhaps also Syrian Valentinian material found in *The Gospel of Philip*.¹⁴ Both his Pachomian affiliation and the correspondence of his *floruit* with the presumed date of the burial of the Nag'–Hammâdi texts make Shenoute a very significant secondary resource for these scholastic currents.

The difficulty remains, however, that in many cases of doctrinal variation primary sources are often identifiable only through secondary (usually patristic) sources. More problematic still is the fact that even in those cases where affiliation of a text is fairly well established, individual points of doctrine are perhaps less so. Insofar as the problem at hand is the nature of the Coptic Christian objection to the use of hieroglyphs, or, conversely, the Gnostic–Hermetic inclination to adopt them, particular references within texts broadly characterizable in these terms do not ensure that the objections or inclinations themselves are similarly identifiable. That these mutually antagonistic attitudes not only exist, but are also theoretically informed, is, however, both demonstrable and pertinent to questions of motivation for the production of an exegetical manual of hieroglyphs.

The Shenoutean corpus of Sahidic Coptic is itself the single most important source of literature in that language. In line with Emmel's work on the corpus it can be recognized as falling into three components: the *Canons* (κानων), *Discourses*, and *Letters* comprising individual works called 'epistles' (ἐπιστολη), 'treatises' or 'discourses' (λογος), and 'sermons' (ἐξηγησις or καθηγησις).¹⁵ I shall be

concerned with three texts in particular: *A Monastic Invective Against Egyptian Hieroglyphs*,¹⁶ *I Am Amazed*,¹⁷ and *As I Sat on a Mountain*.¹⁸

A Monastic Invective Against Egyptian Hieroglyphs is of obvious and direct specificity, but is also of general interest here. The text appears to have been a sermon delivered on the conversion of a pagan temple into a Christian church ‘sometime after 431’.¹⁹

ΑΥΩ ΕΩΧΕΖΑΘΗ | ΜΠΟΥΖ ΖΕΝΝΟ ΜΟΪ ΜΜΝΤΡΕΥ | ΖΕΤΒ ΨΥΧΗ ΝΡΩ || [Γ] |
 ΜΕ ΝΕΤΝΖΗΤΥ | ΕΥΧΖ ΖΝΟΥCΝΟΥ | ΑΥΩ ΖΝΟΥΜΕΛΑ | ΔΝ ΜΑΥΑΑ^Υ · ΜΜΝ
 | ΚΕΛΑΔΥ CΗΖ ΕΡΟΥ | ΝCΑΠΙΝΕ ΝΝΖΟΥ | ΜΝΝΟΥΟΥΖΕ ΜΝ | ΝΕΥΖΟΥΡ ΜΝΝΕ |
 ΜΟΥΥΕ · ΑΥΩ ΝΕΜ | CΟΥΖ · ΜΝΝΕΚΡΟΥΡ | ΜΝΝΒΑΩΟΥΡ · ΜΝ | ΝΚΕΔΑΤΥΕ · ΑΥΩ
 | ΝΕΘΗΡΙΟΝ · ΜΝΝ | ΖΑΛΑΔΤΕ · ΜΝΝ | ΤΒΝΟΥΟΥΕ · ΜΝΠΚΕ | CΕΕΠΕ · ΕΤΙ ΔΕ |
 ΟΝ ΠΙΝΕ ΜΠΡΗ | ΜΝΠΟΥΖ · ΜΜΝ | ΚΟΥΥΕ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΕΖΕΝ | ΖΩΒ ΝCΩΒΕ ΝΕ | ΝΕ
 ΝΕΥΖΒΗΥΕ ΤΗΡΟΥ | ΖΙΒΟΛ²⁰

And if previously it is prescriptions for murdering man’s soul (ψυχή) that are therein, written with blood and not with ink alone – there is nothing else portrayed for them except the likeness of the snakes and scorpions, the dogs and cats, the crocodiles and frogs, the foxes, the other reptiles, the beasts (θηρίον) and birds, the cattle, etc.; furthermore, the likeness of the sun and the moon and all the rest, all their things being nonsense and humbug.²¹

The first point made in the passage is that though hieroglyphs are demonized as ‘prescriptions for murdering man’s soul’ (ΖΕΝΝΟΜΟΣ ΜΜΝΤΡΕΥΖΕΤΒ ΨΥΧΗ ΝΡΩΜΕ), ‘written with blood and not with ink alone’ (ΝΕΤΝΖΗΤΥ ΕΥΧΖ ΖΝΟΥCΝΟΥ ΑΥΩ ΖΝΟΥΜΕΛΑ ΔΝ ΜΑΥΑΑΥ), the invective of the passage is not merely rhetorical. It lends support to the impression that the very use of hieroglyphic script is in itself anathema. Though ‘there is nothing else portrayed for them except the likeness’ (ΜΜΝΚΕΛΑΔΥ CΗΖ ΕΡΟΥ ΝCΑΠΙΝΕ) of a range of creatures and celestial bodies, neither does the piece contribute only the usual details that can be found in the more schematic Graeco-Roman accounts. In fact, it is precisely the fact that hieroglyphs are likenesses of creatures and celestial bodies that explains Shenoute’s characterization of them as ‘murdering the soul’. The situation can be rectified, however, as the sequence goes on to explain, not merely by the destruction of the offending tableaux, but by replacing them with scriptural alternatives. For Shenoute, it is not primarily that hieroglyphs are an offence to Christian sensibilities *qua* script (even a script ‘written in blood’ rather than ink), nor even that the meaning of the inscriptions is contrary to Christian doctrine (though that is undoubtedly true too), but that hieroglyphic inscriptions as such ‘murder the soul’ (ΡΕΥΖΕΤΒ ΨΥΧΗ), whereas ‘the scriptures of life’ (ΝΕΓΡΑΦΗ ΝΩΝΖ) ‘give the soul life’ (ΡΕΥΤΑΝΖΕ ΨΥΧΗ).

In order to develop the implication that the connection between hieroglyphic script and the created world is of itself profane, we have to look elsewhere in the Shenoutean corpus. Doctrinally by far the most important text

for this purpose is *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos*, in which Shenoute attacks the heretics with particular reference to their books, the ‘apocrypha’ (ΝΑΠΟΚΡΥΦΟΝ). Of specific concern are their doctrines concerning: the plurality of worlds; the work of the Son, the value of suffering, against magic; the Pascha; the Father and the Son; souls; Christ’s conception; the Eucharist; the resurrection of the body; God and the stars; and the four elements.²²

The nature of the connection is spelled out as the ‘impiety’ (ΜΗΤΑΣΕΒΗΣ) of the ‘spirit’ (ΠΝΕΥΜΑ), whereby ‘the errors, all of which are written in them, ruin also the good things’ (ΩΑΡΕ ΝΕΘΟΟΥ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΕΤΣΗΖ ΕΡΟΟΥ ΤΑΚΟ ΜΠΚΕΟΥΑ ΕΤΝΑΝΟΥΥ). Furthermore, the association of ‘God the almighty’ (ΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΠΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ) with ‘the orbit of the sun, and that the full moon increases the trees and the animals’ (ΠΕΔΡΟΜΟΣ ΜΠΡΗ ΔΥΩ ΧΕ ΠΜΟΥΖ ΜΠΟΟΖ ΕΦΑΥΖΑΝΕ ΝΝΩΗΝ ΜΝ ΝΤΒΝΟΟΥΕ) are, according to Shenoute, ‘reasons to adore the creature’ (ΝΑΦΟΡΜΗ ΝΩΜΩΕ ΜΠΣΩΝΤ) of he who is responsible for their creation. Similarly, the movement of the sun and moon cannot for Shenoute be accounted for within the generated world, but requires motive force from the Creator. They further deny the resurrection, claiming that the body is formed out of and will dissolve back into the four elements.²³ Here, Shenoute argues, they commit two errors. First, the claim that the body is created out of all four elements and not out of earth alone. Second, the failure to acknowledge that the living soul is breathed into the body by the omnipotent Lord.

The issue reaches decisive momentum in Shenoute’s polemical development against the doctrine of the generation of the Son. The history of the controversy is complex, but the doctrine Shenoute here attacks constitutes one major thread. According to the doctrine of the two-fold stage theory of the generation, the *Logos* existed from eternity in God, and was subsequently, prior to the creation of the world, generated as a distinct personal being. This is the view as taught by Tertullian, Lactantius, and others (with parallels in Philo). The alternative account is the single stage theory according to which the generation of the *Logos* was from eternity. This is the view taught by Irenaeus and, Shenoute’s treatise notwithstanding, Origen.²⁴ The fundamental Origenist misconception (as ascribed) is that for them ‘there was a moment in which the *Logos* itself of God did not exist . . . before being generated’ (ΝΤΟΥ ΖΩΩΥ ΠΛΟΓΟΣ ΜΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΔΟΥΟΥΟΕΙΩ ΩΩΠΕ ΕΝΩΩΟΠ ΔΝ . . . ΜΠΑΤΟΥΧΠΟΥ).²⁵ Or, put another way, ‘He is one of those who are generated and who are created’ (ΟΥΑ ΠΕ ΖΗ ΝΕΤΟΥΧΠΟ ΜΜΟΟΥ ΜΝ ΝΕΤΟΥΣΩΝΤ ΜΜΟΟΥ). These false doctrines are founded on what is for Shenoute the crucial error of the pagans: the appeal to the ontology of the generated to understand that of the ungenerated world.²⁶ Paganism undoes the Christian doctrine of the distinction of God into persons, whether ‘from eternity’ (Irenaeus, Origen, et al.) or generated prior to the creation of the world as a distinct personal being (Philo, Justin Martyr, Tatian, et al.). As noted earlier, the former single-stage account appears as a major polemical target in Shenoute’s *Contra Origenistas* (as well as the Origenist pagans opposed there).²⁷

Several themes and techniques here overlap. The difficulty of disentangling them is in part due to Shenoute’s habit (alluded to earlier) of employing

techniques familiar from the hermeneutical endeavours that he criticizes when practiced by pagans. In, for example, *Ad philosophum gentilem*, he concludes that pagans impute obscurantism to the Holy Spirit with the claim that certain scriptural truths are available only through allegorical interpretation (*εγᾶλληγορεῖ*).²⁸ He does not scruple, however, to compare the presence of pagans within the church to a creature that walks the earth prevailing over one that flies.²⁹ *Ad philosophum gentilem* in fact opens with just such an image, as is familiar from pagan allegoristic, especially in its emphasis on the relevant distinctions drawn between the Christian and pagan within the framework of the allegoristic narrative. Thus, as the author describes himself sitting on the mountain of the *incipit* he sees a creature in the air attacking and overpowering a second creature on the ground.³⁰ Similarly, he develops criticisms of pagan prayer by developing analogies between it and purely physiologically conditioned responses of creatures.³¹ So, for example, the heretic (*αἵρετικός*) and the pagan (*Ἕλληνα*) spread their hands or hold them up in the pretence (*ὑπόκρισις*) that they are praying, just as fowl spread their wings, without signifying sincerity, let alone spirituality.³²

He also brings out pagan weakness by alluding to Pharaoh's susceptibility to the least of creatures in the course of the biblical plagues with which he is beset,³³ while the beneficence of the Christian can be compared with the solicitude of the honey-bee.³⁴ The honey-bee is sought out by men as Christians are sought out by the angels; the bee resembles its parents which descend from the sky as Christian resembles their Creator whose spirit descends from the heavens.

In a passage concerned with the consultation of pagans and heretics, the least of creatures (*πειζῶν ἐνελαιχιστὸν ἐτμμάγ*), Shenoute makes a number of comparisons between oracular and mystery traditions and the senseless croaking of frogs and unknowing beasts (*ἐντβνοογε νᾶτειμε*). They are the object of the jokes of children and the mockery of demons.³⁵ It is clear that he accusations of sophistical (*πετογσοφίζε*) and allegorical (*εγᾶλληγορεῖ*) obscurities (*εἰς γὰρ κακεῖν νευμεεγε*)³⁶ are meant to imply that there is no possibility of consulting 'the usual range of creatures and celestial bodies' in search of knowledge of 'mysteries and that which is hidden of god' (*ἐτβεγενμγστηριον μνγενπεθῆπ ντεπνογτε*). What the Greek conception obscures (according to Shenoute) is the difference between 'faith and sound doctrine and perfect knowledge' (*τπιστικ αγω τε σβῶ ἐτογοχ μῆ πσοογν ἐτχῆκ ἐβολ*) and 'knowledge of lies and perverse doctrine' (*νς(ο)ογν ννογχ αγω σβῶ ἐχβοομε*).³⁷ What separates the Christian and the pagan, in other words, is the difference not between truth and falsehood as determined by the reasonings of Greek sophistry and allegory, but dialectically between Shenoute's Christian encounter with scriptural 'revelation' (*σωληπ*) and the pagan rationalist enquiry into 'what is hidden' (*ἀποκρυφον*).

As mentioned earlier, the main source of a counter-current to the Coptic Christian response to the hieroglyphic tradition can be found in several Coptic sources of a variously Gnostic character which lend support for a diverse

conception of both Christology and hieroglyphic possibilities within an Egyptian monastic environment. That environment may also have been mediated through Evagrian influences. Though Evagrian material was originally Greek, the tradition would, in light of Shenoute's polemic, appear to have survived in Coptic. Both Young (1970) and Orlandi (1982) have proposed that the historical environment and literary career of Shenoute may in fact further mediate that counter-current.³⁸ If the proposal can be taken at face value, two important texts for this purpose belong amongst the Nag'-Hammâdi Codices.³⁹ They are *The Gospel of Truth* (ΠΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΝΤΜΗΕ) and *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth* (ΠΩΔΕ ΝΤΜΑΖΩΜΟΥΝΕ ΜΝ ΤΜΑΖΪΤΕ).

The former exists in two versions in the Nag'-Hammâdi corpus, the first, almost complete in the Upper Egyptian Coptic dialect of Subakhmimic (= Lycopolitan = Assiutic) as the third of five titles contained in codex I (the Jung Foundation Codex), the second in fragments, in Sahidic (= Sa'idic = Thebaic) as the second of three titles contained in codex X2. Its relation to the Valentinian text of the same name, mentioned by Irenaeus⁴⁰ is uncertain, though 'the general Valentinian affinities of codex I' make it seem likely it is the same text in a Coptic translation of a Greek original composed between 140 and 180 A.D.⁴¹ The relatively short text (running from p. 16 to p. 43 of codex I) is in general concerned with 'the oblivion of error' (†ΒΩΕ ΝΤΕ †ΠΛΑΝΗ) and its remedy 'through the mercies of the Father, the hidden mystery, Jesus, the Christ' (ΖΪΤΝ ΝΙΜΝΤΩΑΝΖΤΗΓ ΝΤΕ ΠΩΤ· ΠΙΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΕΘΗΠ ΙΗ(ΣΟΥ)Σ ΠΕΧΡ(ΙΣΤΟ)Σ).⁴² The relevant passage discusses the knowledge of the living book (ΠΙΣΑΥΝΕ ΝΤΕ ΠΙΧΩΩΜΕ ΕΤΑΝΖ):⁴³

ΣΕΤΕ ΠΕΕΙ ΠΕ ΠΙΣΑΥΝΕ ΝΤΕ ΠΙΧΩΩΜΕ ΕΤΑΝΖ ΕΝΤΑΦΟΥΑΝΖΓ· ΝΝΙΑΙΩΝ ΑΤΘΑΗ ΝΝΙΣΖΕ[ΕΙ ΝΤΟ]ΟΤΓ ΕΦΟΥΑΝΖ ΑΒΑΛ· ΕΙΩ[Ε]ΧΕ ΕΖΝΤΟΠΟΣ ΕΝ ΝΕ· ΝΤΕ ΖΝΣΜΗ ΟΥΔΕ ΖΝΣΖΕΕΙ ΕΝ ΝΕ· ΕΥΩΑΑΤ· ΝΝΟΥΖΡΑΥ ΩΙΝΑ ΝΤΕΟΥΕΕΙ ΑΩΟΥ ΝΪΜΕΥΕ ΑΥΠΕΤΩΟΥΕΙΤ· ΑΛΛΑ ΖΝΣΖΕΕΙ ΝΕ ΝΤΕ †ΜΝΤΜΗΕ ΝΤΑΥ ΕΥΩΕΧΕ ΕΥΣΑΥΝΕ ΝΜΑΥ ΟΥΔΕΕΤΟΥ ΕΟΥΜΕ<ΕΥΕ> ΕΦΧΗΚ ΠΕ ΠΣΖΕΕΙ ΠΣΖΕΕΙ ΜΠΡΗΤΕ ΝΝΟΥΧΩΩΜΕ· ΕΦΧΗΚ ΑΒΑΛ· ΕΖΝΣΖΕΕΙ ΝΕ ΑΥΣΑΖΟΥ ΑΒΑΛ ΖΪΤΟΟΤΣ· Ν†ΜΝΤΟΥΕΕΙ· ΕΑΖΑΠΩΤ· ΣΑΖΟΥ <Ν>ΝΙΑΙΩΝ ΩΙΝΑ ΑΒΑΛ· ΖΪΤΟΟΤΟΥ ΝΝΙΣΖΕΕΙ ΝΤΟΟΤΓ· ΕΥΑΣΟΥΩΝ ΠΩΤ.⁴⁴

This is the knowledge of the living book, which he revealed to the aeons (αἰών) at the end as his letters, revealing how they are not places (τόπος) of voices nor (οὐδέ) are they letters lacking sound, so that one might read them and think of something empty, but (ἀλλά) they are letters of the truth, which they alone speak who know them. Each letter is a complete <thought>, each letter is like a complete book, since they are letters written by the Unity, the Father having written them for the aeons (αἰών), in order that by means of his letters they should know the Father.⁴⁵

Several features distinguish an interest in written characters entirely distinct from, if not immune to, the criticisms levelled at their use in Shenoute. That these written characters are ostensibly the revelation of the *Logos* for the return of

humankind to knowledge of the Father need not detract from the point.⁴⁶ The signal contribution is the development of a conception of how the characters legitimize an understanding of the truth as denied in the Shenoutean critique, namely, by virtue of each letter being a *complete thought* (ΕΟΥΜΕ<ΕΥΕ> ΕΦΔΗΚ ΠΕ ΠΣΖΕΕΙ), written by the *Unity* (ΑΥΣΑΖΟΥ ΑΒΑΛ ΖΗΤΟΟΤΣ· | ΝΗΜΗΝΤΟΥΕΕΙ·).⁴⁷

Shenoute's objection to allegorical and sophistical reasonings on higher matters through items belonging to the lower world is not then obviated, but bolstered by appeal to an explanatory principle justifying the procedure. In *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth* the procedure itself is clearly highlighted, but lacks the principled justification.⁴⁸

The character of this discourse, between Hermes Trismegistus and an initiate, exhibits features notably familiar from other Greek-language hermetic and Platonic texts, for example, *Poimandres*, particularly in its emphasis on (i) the injunction to write the words of the book on a stele of turquoise (ΠΩΔΧΕ | ΜΠΧΩΩΜΕ ΣΑΖΩ ΔΝΣΤΗ- | ΛΗ ΝΚΑΛΑΕΙΝΟΣ·), (ii) the astronomically correct time for the teaching being engraved, and (iii) the eight guardians, of whom the males on the right are frog-faced (ΜΠΡΟΣΩ- | Π{Ρ}ΟΝ ΝΚΡΟΥΡ·), and the females on the left cat-faced (ΜΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΝ ΝΕΜΟΥ·). Perhaps for that reason, as well as the premiss that the initiate has already advanced through the lower levels of spiritual ascent, no immediate justification is felt to be requisite. Nonetheless, a reason is given for writing the book specifically in *hieroglyphic* characters (ΖΝ ΖΗΣΖΕΕΙ ΝΣΑΖΠΡΑΕΙΩ·): 'for *Mind* himself has become overseer of these' (ΠΝΟΥΣ ΓΑΡ ΟΥΑΔΥ ΝΤΑΥ- | ΩΩΠΕ ΝΝΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ | ΝΝΑΙ).

During the period of pagan resistance to Christian persecution opposition to hieroglyphs, then, raised two objections to their use: first, the reliance on non-scriptural sources; and, second, the application of allegorizing or sophistical reasoning to those sources. Other contemporary sources, including treatises belonging to the Nag'-Hammâdi corpus, had pre-empted these objections by arguing that certain written characters provide a legitimate understanding of higher order truths by virtue of each character being a complete thought written by the ungenerated *Unity*. Pagans too had similarly conceived of a form of hieroglyphic exegesis methodologically principled in accordance with late academic Platonist logico-metaphysical conceptions of 'analytic ascent' in hieroglyphic exegesis from the phenomena depicted, through the concepts under which they fall, to their intelligible causes. In line with their semantic theory, the Neoplatonists developed a tripartite metaphysical framework of sensible phenomena, universal concepts, and intelligible causes to which the three modes of expression – of which, according to the Greek exegetes, hieroglyphic Egyptian is capable – correspond. The first, mediated by spoken language, is the capacity to represent sensible phenomena. The second presents those phenomena conceptually, but unmediated by speech. The third presents the intelligible causes of phenomena allusively or allegoristically. This is possible, as I will go on to argue next, because hieroglyphic signs are themselves composites of sensible and intelligible elements that are therefore susceptible to interpretation as material images, as unmediated concepts, or as intelligible realities. On this

account semantic theory is a matter of particular interest for the interpretation of hieroglyphs because they lend themselves to analytic inferential procedures through discursive reason to metaphysical insights.

The crucial Coptic Christian objection that had been brought against pagan textual exegesis was directed against the latter's reliance on reason either as the sole source, or as the sole criterion of truth. What grounds the Christian accusation of sophism (πετογσοφίζε), allegory (εγλληγορει), and rationalized obscurantism (εαγρ κακεζν νεγμεεγε) was an imputed relativism in the decisive emphasis cultivated Hellenism had placed on the process of reflection and ratiocination (λόγος). Specifically, the speculative application of allusion (αίνιττεσθαι) and allegory (ἀλληγορεῖν) to empirical phenomena in pursuit of ungenerated first causes was particularly unacceptable.⁴⁹ This is *prima facie* a difficult objection to understand given the extensive use of the same exegetical techniques on the part of the Christians themselves. However, the Christian objection to pagan employment of those techniques was established on two related and in this context decisively Christian observations. First, the undue limitation placed by pagan rationalism on assumptions that could be made about divine agency within the natural order, since the rejection of revelation was at the same time a rejection of the idea that God might do anything which could be understood only through revelation. Second, the related problem that inference from observations in the sensible world to ideas about the intelligible might lead to speculations which were at positively at odds with the truth about God.

Porphyry is especially forceful in addressing specific aspects of the Christian critique of pagan rationalism as a means to understanding, both by means of a sustained counterattack in *Contra Christianos* and through the defence of pagan superiority over Christian appropriation of pagan allegoristic in *De philosophia ex oraculis*. It is not only that the accusation reflected back onto the Christians themselves, who clearly made extensive use of allegoristic exegeses of biblical passages, especially, in the Alexandrian context, in Clement and Origen. Rather, in so doing, the allegorical method had been misapplied in reference to unsuitable texts, and fruitlessly or unclearly applied in its reliance on revelation where reason alone had failed to reveal the allegorical meaning of the passage, or applied with rationally unacceptable results.⁵⁰ In neither the Christian nor the pagan cases, however, did the objections rest on the use of allegory or allusion as such. On both sides the focus is on the material to which the interpretative procedure is applied. Each thought the other's texts were incapable of supporting the metaphysical load placed on them, but the results were both superfluous to and at odds with, respectively, scripturally revealed or rationally defensible truths.

The hieroglyphic tradition was routinely seen as premised on a form of allegorical or allusive interpretation, and was to that extent susceptible to the same objections. Several representatives of the various schools of late Platonism address, both directly and indirectly, themes emerging from the hieroglyphic tradition that preceded it. The nature of those schools' interest in that tradition

and its part in a broader engagement in theosophical speculation was a matter remarked upon even within late Platonism itself. The engagement with theosophical topics was seen as a development alongside the strictly philosophical subjects, but prioritized in the activities of ‘Syrian school’ under the momentum provided by Iamblichus. It was this reversal of emphasis that particularly distinguished the latter from the Roman school that had preceded it and was to influence the Alexandrian and Athenian schools that followed.

*οἱ μὲν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν προτιμῶσιν, ὡς Πορφύριος καὶ Πλωτῖνος καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ φιλόσοφοι· οἱ δὲ τὴν ἱερατικὴν, ὡς Ἰάμβλιχος καὶ Συριανὸς καὶ Πρόκλος καὶ οἱ ἱερατικοὶ πάντες.*⁵¹

Some prefer philosophy, as Porphyry and Plotinus, and many other philosophers; but others [prefer] the hieratic art, such as Iamblichus and Syrianus and Proclus and all those who are sacerdotal.

Whether this is an accurate picture of one kind of difference between scholastic or doctrinal tendencies or not, one especial advantage of late Platonism for the understanding of the hieroglyphic tradition is nevertheless its position at the end of the broader development of Platonism quite generally. The consequent prospect of both an overview and synthesis of preceding developments is possible, in fact, in large part due to a curricular feature across which those themes are distributed. The themes in question are classifiable into the three parts: natural science, logic, and theology. Inquiring into natural causes and phenomena, the natural science part looks to material originating in hieroglyphic Egyptian from the perspective of Graeco-Egyptian cultural and natural history. For the inquiry into the processes of discursive reasoning, the logical part looks to hieroglyphic Egyptian from the perspective of the rational relations between language, mind, and world. The theological part looks to the unity, origin, and efficacy of hieroglyphic wisdom on the subject of the gods and cosmology.

The question, therefore, with which the following sections are concerned is how these three parts of the curriculum are related to each in such a way as to account for both the role played by theosophical speculation in general, and hieroglyphic exegesis in particular. The aim is to establish the Egyptizing philosophical subjects both as proper topics for philosophical investigation and as consciously addressing the Christian accusations of sophistical and allegorical obscurity.

4.2 The allegory of hieroglyphic Egyptian

Uniquely in the Greek exegeses, Plotinus notes a script-variation in the form of ‘an image already evolved in another, and saying it discursively’ (*εἰδωλὸν ἐν ἄλλῳ ἐξειλιγμένον ἤδη, καὶ λέγον ἀὐτὸ ἐν διεξόδῳ*).⁵² If hieratic and elements of demotic script can be described as (dis)cursive hieroglyphic, then the distinctive feature of hieroglyphic in the narrow sense must be conceived of as bound to the media or means of their production. Insofar as the crucial feature of the

hieroglyphic characters is their *transparency* as depictions of sensible phenomena, a feature lost in the cursive development of hieroglyphs in the demotic and hieratic scripts, Plotinus specifically ties the hieroglyphic usage to the availability of the meaning of the glyph in its depictive immediacy.

Porphyry, like Clement before him, had maintained a three-fold distinction of Egyptian script:

*Καὶ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ μὲν τοῖς ἱερεῦσι συνῆν καὶ τὴν σοφίαν ἐξέμαθε, καὶ τὴν Αἰγυπτίων φωνήν, γραμμάτων δὲ τρισσὰς διαφοράς, ἐπιστολογραφικῶν τε καὶ ἱερογλυφικῶν καὶ συμβολικῶν, τῶν μὲν κυριολογουμένων κατὰ μίμησιν, τῶν δὲ ἀλληγορουμένων κατὰ τινὰς αἰνιγμούς· καὶ περὶ θεῶν πλεον τι ἔμαθεν.*⁵³

In Egypt he conversed with the priests and learned their wisdom, and the speech of the Egyptians, and the three different types of script, epistolographic, hieroglyphic, and symbolic, some used in primary sense by imitation, others used allegorically by certain allusions; and he learnt something more about the gods.

The epistolographic may either be supposed to be a reference to the rendering of the phonetic content of the Egyptian spoken language, or to either the demotic (*δημοτικά*) or the hieratic (*ἱερατικά*) script. If the latter, then Porphyry does not recognize hieratic as cursive hieroglyphic. His three-fold distinction (*τρισσὰς διαφοράς*) is arranged by using *τε . . . καὶ* to separate the *epistolographic* from both the *hieroglyphic* and *symbolic* uses, such that the two-part explanatory comment that follows can refer only to the latter two types. Since the primary distinction is therefore between epistolographic and non-epistolographic types of script, there is reason to suppose that the secondary distinction between script ‘used with primary significance mimetically’ (*τῶν μὲν κοινολογουμένων κατὰ μίμησιν*) and ‘used with allegorical significance allusively’ (*τῶν δὲ ἀλληγορουμένων κατὰ τινὰς αἰνιγμούς*) correspond to the hieroglyphic and symbolic uses respectively. What is crucial in Porphyry’s classification is that hieroglyphic signs may be used in two ways: (i) in virtue of their mimetic aspect and (ii) in virtue of their allusive or allegorical aspect. One way, then, to understand the term ‘hieroglyphic’ here might be to take it to mean the non-discursive presentation of unmediated and unified thought.⁵⁴ It is possible it should also be taken to cover the figurative or tropic uses identified by Clement, though in view of the philosophical weight borne by the Plotinian use, it perhaps seems more likely that these too are symbolic. We should remind ourselves, then, that though otherwise quite similar to Clement’s earlier scheme, it differs from it in one important respect. The Porphyrian division of labour between the modes of expression involves a clearly distinct use of the notion of the qualification ‘symbolic’ to refer to a new relation, independent of the purely depictive function of hieroglyphs, which is referred to as *allegorical and allusive*.

Egyptian writing is, then, according to Porphyry, capable of three modes of expression. The first it shares with Greek: namely, the capacity to render the

spoken language. The second is depictive, capable of signifying its meaning transparently, that is, without recourse to the medium of the spoken language. The third is allusive, susceptible of, or requiring interpretation. On the face of it, this is a straightforward claim about how the Egyptians used their scripts. I shall, however, argue that these distinctions are in fact theoretically motivated by a specific conception of meaning, which is in turn justified by Platonic metaphysical distinctions. Both the semantic and metaphysical basis for the Porphyrian model of hieroglyphics had wide currency in Neoplatonic thought and were significantly developed by Iamblichus and given scholastic expression in Proclus. In the rest of this chapter, therefore, I develop an account of first, the role of Neoplatonic semantic theory within the broader metaphysical framework to which it belonged; and, second, the interpretative methodology applied on the basis of that framework to the specific understanding of Egyptian hieroglyphs current amongst the Neoplatonic exegetes.

One possible approach to the question would be to suppose that the emphasis placed on the need to *interpret* hieroglyphs is explained as a consequence of a prior commitment to reading symbolism into Egyptian inscriptions and by tracing that commitment back either to earlier Christian-Gnostic or Jewish-Alexandrine tradition. That would, however, postpone the question. In providing instruction in the interpretation of hieroglyphs, neither Iamblichus nor the tradition more generally entertains any scruples in spelling out the esoteric meaning of hieroglyphic symbols. It cannot be maintained, therefore, that the need for interpretation arises simply from a desire, attributed to the Egyptian scribes, to preclude the possibility of profanation of doctrine by its being accessible to the uninitiated. Clearly, this may be one type of motivation, and Iamblichus is explicit that Egyptian *αἰνίγματα* do serve a concealing function.⁵⁵ However, if initiatic secrecy were merely a matter of receiving proper instruction, then esotericism could not be other than a contingent feature.

The conception of hieroglyphic Egyptian at stake is the textual tradition of recorded ‘perfect speech’ (*mdt-nfrrt*), capable of a divine power or efficacy missing in, for example, Greek. The theme of the particular superiority of Egyptian over Greek (and of texts in the original language to translations) as the language of theology is in this sense far from incidental to the Neoplatonic project.⁵⁶ If what is elemental in language can also be assumed to be original, then some attempt to recover ancient linguistic elements might be expected to work as a route to original understanding of the natural appropriacy and divine power of names in denoting their objects. The particular form of ‘the terms that are unintelligible’ (*τὰ ἄσημα ὀνόματα*),⁵⁷ identified as the language of the priests and the speech of the gods, must, for Iamblichus, remain untranslated because it preserves the most archaic, i.e. primitive and original form of a visible manifestation of the divine – the ideal being the intelligible manifestation of divinity in silence. To call such terms ‘unutterable and barbarous’ (*τῶν ὀνομάτων τῶν τε ἀφθέγκτων καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων*) is a trait of the Egyptian peasantry, who do not exhibit the superiority of those Egyptians who first were allotted communion with the gods.⁵⁸

Iamblichus therefore explains that the origin of Egyptian symbolism lies in a desire born of Egyptian native superiority to inferior peoples to provide a mode of initiation into the mysteries through symbols. The answer to the question of the *necessity* of interpretation lies, on Iamblichus' own understanding of 'Egyptian theology' (τῶν Αἰγυπτίων τὸν τρόπον τῆς θεολογίας), in mimetic display of the nature of the objects of theological or metaphysical language and thought in visible symbolic form.

Τῆς δ' αὐτῆς θεοσόφου Μούσης κάκεῖνα δεῖται εἰς τὴν διάλυσιν τὰ ἀπορήματα· πρότερον δέ σοι βούλομαι τῶν Αἰγυπτίων τὸν τρόπον τῆς θεολογίας διερμηνεῦσαι· οὗτοι γὰρ τὴν φύσιν τοῦ παντός καὶ τὴν δημιουργίαν τῶν θεῶν μιμούμενοι καὶ αὐτοὶ τῶν μυστικῶν καὶ ἀποκεκρυμμένων καὶ ἀφανῶν νοήσεων εἰκόνας τινὰς διὰ συμβόλων ἐκφαίνουσιν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ φύσις τοῖς ἐμφανέσιν εἶδεσι τοὺς ἀφανεῖς λόγους διὰ συμβόλων τρόπον τινὰ ἀπετυπώσατο, ἡ δὲ τῶν θεῶν δημιουργία τὴν ἀλήθειαν τῶν ἰδεῶν διὰ τῶν φανερῶν εἰκόνων ὑπεγράψατο. Εἰδότες οὖν χαίροντα πάντα τὰ κρείττονα ὁμοιώσει τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων καὶ βουλόμενοι αὐτὰ ἀγαθῶν οὕτω πληροῦν διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν μιμήσεως, εἰκότως καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸν πρόσφορον αὐτῆς τρόπον τῆς κεκρυμμένης ἐν τοῖς συμβόλοις μυσταγωγίας προφέρουσιν.⁵⁹

The following difficulties require the same theosophical Muse for their solution, but first of all, I would like to explain to you the mode of theology practised by the Egyptians. For these people, imitating the nature of the universe and the demiurgic power of the gods, display certain signs of mystical, arcane and invisible intellections by means of symbols, just as nature copies the unseen principles in visible forms through some mode of symbolism, and the creative activity of the gods indicates the truth of the forms in visible signs. Perceiving, therefore, that all superior beings rejoice in the efforts of their inferiors to imitate them, and therefore wish to fill them with good things, insofar as it is possible through imitation, it is reasonable that they should proffer a mode of concealment that is appropriate to the mystical doctrine of concealment in symbols.⁶⁰

For that reason, conventionally determined concepts – which vary as such from people to people and from time to time – create ambiguity unsuitable for the superior purpose of forming concepts of the divine.

Given a sufficiently well-developed account of the various types of relations described in the previous chapters (between the sign in question, what it depicts, what it signifies, and how it informs the associated exegetical procedure), one possible account of the nature and content of the allusive or enigmatic function of hieroglyphs lies in those elements of the tradition of hieroglyphic exegesis that are either avowedly or acknowledged to be philosophically informed or orientated. This is not an innovation on Neoplatonism's part. Van der Horst (1987) and Le Boulluec (1981) have correspondingly noted extensive exegetical parallels for the exegeses of Porphyry

and Iamblichus earlier in Clement and Plutarch, suggestive of a common source in Chaeremon, who, it is supposed, was most likely first to have identified these exegetical possibilities peculiar to the Egyptian material.⁶¹ Chaeremon is typically identified by three epithets: *ἱερογραμματεὺς*, *φιλόσοφος*, and *Στωϊκός*. That the latter is an appropriate designation is apparent from the typically Stoic exegetical strategy of employing a ‘natural theory of the gods’ (*φυσικὸς λόγος περὶ θεῶν*),⁶² and conceiving ‘in general everything as referring to physical things’ (*ὅλως πάντα εἰς τὰ φυσικά*).⁶³ This might naturally be expected to encounter some doctrinal resistance amongst Platonists and just such doctrinal differences are perhaps most explicit in Porphyry’s reconsideration of Chaeremon. The latter had, for example, advanced a physical-astral conception of divinity⁶⁴ rejected by Porphyry⁶⁵ on Platonizing grounds (perhaps signifying a change in Porphyry’s attitude to Chaeremon)⁶⁶ but paralleled by two passages from the *Stromata* on the subject of hieroglyphs and at least one passage from the *Hieroglyphica*, collected by Van der Horst among the *fragmenta dubia* of Chaeremon.⁶⁷

*Χαιρήμων μὲν γὰρ καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι οὐδ’ ἄλλο τι πρὸ τῶν ὁρωμένων κόσμων ἡγοῦνται, ἐν ἀρχῇς λόγῳ τιθέμενοι τοὺς Αἰγυπτίων, οὐδ’ ἄλλους θεοὺς πλὴν τῶν πλανητῶν λεγομένων καὶ τῶν συμπληρούντων τὸν ζῳδιακὸν καὶ ὅσοι τούτοις παρανατέλλουσιν, τὰς τε εἰς τοὺς δεκανοὺς τομὰς καὶ τοὺς ὠροσκόπους καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους κραταιοὺς ἡγεμόνας*⁶⁸

For Chaeremon and the others do not believe in anything prior to the visible worlds, stating that the basic principles are the gods of the Egyptians and that there are no other gods than the so-called planets, and those stars which fill up the zodiac, and all those that rise near them, and the sections relating to the decans, and the horoscopes, and the so-called mighty rulers.⁶⁹

On the one hand, Porphyry himself elaborates extensively on thematic depictions of Egyptian-provenanced *realia* in the treatise *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων*: girdle, sceptre, royal wing, egg; feet joined together, robe of many colours, golden sphere; and man embarked on a ship set on a crocodile. Divine names, sacred animals, comets, etc. are all covered, as is any natural object or phenomenon thought to be susceptible of being signified or signifying in some sense: natural signs, written signs of sounds, or hieroglyphic signs of natural objects.

*Ἥλιον δὲ σημαίνουσιν ποτὲ μὲν δι’ ἀνθρώπου ἐπιβεβηκότος πλοῖον, τοῦ πλοίου ἐπὶ κροκοδείλου κειμένου. δηλοῖ δὲ τὸ μὲν πλοῖον τὴν ἐν ὑγρῷ κίνησιν, ὃ δὲ κροκόδειλος πότιμον ὕδωρ, ἐν ᾧ φέρεται ὁ ἥλιος. ἐσημαίνετο τοίνυν ὁ ἥλιος δι’ ἀέρος ὑγροῦ καὶ γλύκεος τὴν περιπόλησιν ποιεῖσθαι.*⁷⁰

They *signify* the sun by a man embarked on a ship which is set upon a crocodile. The ship indicates the sun’s movement in a liquid element, the crocodile the potable water in which the sun moves. Thus they signify that the sun accomplishes his revolution through air that is liquid and sweet.⁷¹

However, a crucial Platonic distinction, on the basis of which Porphyry rejects what he sees as the reductive physicalism of his Stoic predecessor, is preserved in the explicit denial that the material concerning natural phenomena as such is the direct object of Egyptian theosophical speculation.

ὅτι δὲ οὐδὲ τὰ ζῷα θεοὺς ἡγοῦνται, εἰκόνας δὲ ἐποιοῦντο καὶ σύμβολα ταῦτα θεῶν, δηλοῖ τὸ πολλαχοῦ βοῦς ἀναχθέντας θεοῖς ἐν ταῖς ἱερομηνίαις καὶ ταῖς πρὸς θεοὺς θρησκείαις βουθυτεῖν. ἡλίῳ μὲν γὰρ καὶ σελήνῃ βοῦς ἀνιέρωσαν.⁷²

But that they do not believe the animals to be gods but made them the images and symbols of the gods is apparent from the fact that in many places they bring up bulls for the gods at their festivals in the sacred months and in their religious services and sacrifice them. For they consecrate bulls to the sun and the moon.⁷³

For Porphyry, it is not the ‘images and symbols’ in themselves that are the objects of theological interest, but what they are images and symbols of. On the contrary, in the presumably generalizable cases of bulls what these images and symbols represent and symbolize are immune to the variability one finds in the images themselves. This distinction consequently enables Porphyry to argue that the names of the gods in various languages are simply variant expressions of the same divine reality,⁷⁴ a doctrine which Iamblichus would later strenuously oppose.

Though motivated, then, by the unacceptability of the Stoic analysis in accordance with which the gods are interpreted in the strictly physical terms of their representation, it is not, however, allegorical interpretation as such that Porphyry rejects. Instead it is the application of these exegetical techniques without the guidance of the appropriate metaphysical *τέλος* of the philosophical endeavour, namely an interpretation observing properly Platonic criteria for an exegesis of the structure and genesis of the cosmos. It was necessary to conceive of allegorical interpretation in such a way as to preserve the individual ontological identities of the object to be interpreted and the object of which it is interpreted as being an allegory. This is because it was the respective ontological statuses of these objects upon which the allegorical reinterpretation of the culturally Egyptian material is dependent for its relevance.⁷⁵

Iamblichus opposed any form of syncretism in the exegetical endeavour by appeal to a natural/conventional language distinction. To the extent that names are established as a matter of communitarian convention and thus subject to normative procedures for determining meaningfulness, the translation of names from one language into another has no significative consequences. However, natural names, names ‘dependent on the nature of real beings’ (*τῇ φύσει συνήρτηται τῶν ὄντων*), are capable of an activity tied to the objects of that activity so much the better suited to sacred purposes and for that reason preferred both by sacred peoples and their superiors (*τοῖς κρείττοσιν*), the gods alike. This is because the native names ‘possess weightiness and great precision,

participating in less ambiguity, variability and multiplicity of expression' (*πολλὴν μὲν ἔμφρασιν πολλὴν δὲ συντομίαν, ἀμφιβολίας τε ἐλάττονος μετέσχηκε καὶ ποικιλίας καὶ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν λέξεων*).⁷⁶

The question is how this natural appropriacy is theorized.

We have already examined the move from the sort of mimetic connection between a hieroglyph and the item it depicts (through their respective roles in ostensive definition) to a binary connection whereby a relation is established between a glyph and its semantic content that we might think of as horizontal and internal (because neither can be explained without reference to the other). We have also seen similarly binary connections between signs as terms in inferential procedures. My argument here will be that the symbolic use of hieroglyphs (and I here use 'symbolic' in the Porphyrian rather than the Clementian sense) entails internal relations of the semantic kind, but arranged vertically, rather than horizontally, with respect to the original semantic application, by virtue of the *dependence* of the symbolic use for its meaning on the semantic use (in that it presupposes the prior semantic relation), but horizontally with respect to its new symbolic surroundings.

It is in this sense and context that I argue that the interpretation of hieroglyphs is structured on the methodological principle of vertical 'analytic ascent' from the phenomena depicted, through the concepts (understood as consisting in semantic relations) under which they fall, to their intelligible (that is, 'metaphysical') causes symbolically 'appropriated' (*παρειλήφασιν*). On the basis of this account it is plausible to infer that these three stages in the ascent correspond to the three modes of expression of which, according to Neoplatonic exegetes such as Porphyry, hieroglyphic Egyptian is capable. Moreover, it is as composites of material images of sensible particulars and the intelligible content by virtue of which those particulars exist, Neoplatonic hieroglyphs lend themselves to analytic inferential procedures through discursive reason to metaphysical insights.

As we saw in Chapter 2, the two main traditions of interpretation of the semantics of the Neoplatonic Aristotelian commentators are: (i) a bipartite theory according to which words directly signify things without the mediation of concepts; and (ii) a tripartite theory whereby words directly signify concepts and thereby, indirectly, things. Simplicius explicitly seeks to unify the two traditions, a possibility which Porphyry had already provided for, and cites otherwise unidentified Academicians (*οἱ δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας*)⁷⁷ to the effect that words signify neither concepts, nor things, but things insofar as they fall under concepts, which are cases and resultants. Accordingly, the resulting logico-metaphysical picture provided for may briefly be spelled out as follows. Written language differs from spoken language by virtue of medium alone.⁷⁸ Spoken language differs from thought as the actualization of a potentiality for articulation or utterance. Predicative thought is causally effected by the phenomena of the sensible world (and therefore *posterior* to it), but by virtue of the *prior* relation of participation of the sensible in the intelligible.

So much for the semantic relation within the context of an exclusively logical topic as, for example, Iamblichus conceives Porphyry's discussion of the Aristotelian categories, and which allows for the mediation of concepts (*νοήματα*) between expressions (*φωναί*) and realities (*πράγματα*). These three elements, however, constitute in Iamblichus' own account a tripartite account of universals (*τὰ καθόλου*), not simply the controversial subject-matter of Aristotle's text. Each element is the proper subject of three distinct disciplines, namely: logic, natural science, and theology respectively; and each part of the account is mapped onto the canonical tripartite account of the subject-matter of the *Categories*.

*εἰ τοίνυν περὶ γενῶν, ὡς εἴρηται, ἐστὶν αὐτῷ ὁ σκοπός, οἶδε δὲ πάλιν ἡ λογικὴ οὐ τὰ πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν (θεολογίας γὰρ ἔργον τοῦτο), οὐδὲ τὰ ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς (φυσιολογίας γὰρ τοῦτο), ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐννοηματικά τὰ ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ ὑστερογενῇ, πῶς οὐκ ἔσται αὐτῷ ὁ σκοπὸς περὶ νοημάτων ἐνταῦθα, εἴ γε λογικὴ ἐστὶν ἡ μετὰ χειρὸς πραγματεία;*⁷⁹

If then for him the topic is about genera, as it is said, once again logic investigates not things before the many (for that is the task of theology), nor things in the many (for this is [the task] of inquiry into natural phenomena), but concepts which are over the many and posterior, how for him will the topic not be about ideas here, if at any rate logic is the business at hand?

According to these correspondences, (i) *expressions* are 'in the many' (*ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς*) and are the subject of natural science, (ii) *concepts* are 'over the many' (*ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς*) and the subject of logic, and (iii) *realities* are 'before the many' (*πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν*) and the subject of theology. It is against this background that the peculiar significative possibilities of hieroglyphic language in particular should be considered.⁸⁰

The correspondences are not, however, entirely transparent. On the one hand, one might have expected, for instance, that the 'realities' of the tripartite account (which were the objects signified by utterances through the medium of concepts), would be classified as items 'in the many', i.e. the particulars of the Porphyrian account. On the other hand, on the standard tripartite account expressions too are particulars, a complication that Iamblichus' proposal resolves by juxtaposition of the Platonic 'top-down' account – i.e. by identifying realities with intelligible rather than sensible objects, proceeding from the intelligible to the sensible.

*οὐ μία τοίνυν γέγονε δόξα περὶ τοῦ σκοποῦ τῶν Κατηγοριῶν, ἀλλὰ τοσαῦται γεγόνασιν δόξαι, ὅσα τὰ ὄντα κατέστηκε· τριπτὰ δὲ ταῦτα, ἢ πράγματα ἢ νοήματα ἢ φωναί, καὶ τὰ μὲν πράγματα θεόθεν παράγεται, τὰ δὲ νοήματα ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦ, αἱ δὲ φωναὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς.*⁸¹

Not one opinion then has arisen concerning the subject-matter of the *Categories*, as many opinions as actual objects have established; these are

three, whether realities, concepts, or expressions, and realities are produced from god, concepts by the mind, and expressions by the soul.

Thereby a characteristically Neoplatonic hierarchical ontology is developed such that it is *expressions* that are ‘by the soul’ (ὕπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς), *concepts* are ‘by the mind’ (ὕπὸ τοῦ νοῦ), and *realities* are ‘from god’ (θεόθεν). Porphyry’s Aristotelian account, by virtue of being purely ‘logical’, deals only with the first two levels of the ontological hierarchy: both expressions (φωναί) and objects (πράγματα) in that account are ‘in the many’ and concepts (νοήματα) are ‘over the many’. It is the Platonic account that supplies realities (πράγματα), which are ‘before the many’.

The position attributed by Simplicius and Olympiodorus to Iamblichus and outlined earlier appears at first sight to present a radical departure from the Porphyrian semantic account, not merely (if one is committed to attributing to him a bipartite semantics) by conceding a mediating role to concepts – though this is not, as I have argued, inconsistent with the bipartite theory – but also by contributing a further layer of ‘intellective interpretation’ (νοερὰ θεωρία) in order to establish the possibility of an exegesis of the metaphysical substrate of the lower ontological orders. The sources, however, emphasize both continuity and complementarity.

μετὰ τοῦτον δὲ ὁ θεῖος Ἰάμβλιχος πολύστιχον καὶ αὐτὸς πραγματείαν εἰς τοῦτο τὸ βιβλίον κατεβάλετο, τὰ μὲν πολλὰ τοῖς Πορφυρίου καὶ ἐπ’ αὐτῆς τῆς λέξεως κατακολουθῶν, τινὰ δὲ ἐπικρίνων ἐκείνων καὶ διαρθρῶν ἀκριβέστερον μετὰ τοῦ συστέλλειν τὴν ὡς ἐν σχολαῖς πρὸς τὰς ἐνστάσεις μακρολογίαν, πανταχοῦ δὲ τὴν νοερὰν θεωρίαν ἐκάστω σχεδὸν τῶν κεφαλαίων ἐπιτιθεὶς καὶ τι καὶ ἄλλο πρὸς τούτοις χρήσιμον τῷ συγγράμματι προστιθείς.⁸²

After this the divine Iamblichus himself set down a lengthy treatise in this book, for the most part following what Porphyry [had written] even in respect of the same phrasing, and selecting some of these extracts more precisely by editing prolixity against objections as in lectures, and everywhere imposing intellective speculation to almost every chapter and adding to these something else useful in the composition.

Iamblichus reasoned, we are told, that the logical (λογικός) account (attributed to Porphyry) stands in need of correction for its emphasis on ‘the utterances by the soul’ (αἱ δὲ φωναί ὑπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς), which are ‘in the many’ (ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς) and ‘the work of natural science’ (φυσιολογίας γὰρ τοῦτο). The conceptual (ἐννοηματικός) account (attributed to Alexander), similarly needs realignment, for its emphasis on ‘the concepts by the mind’ (τὰ δὲ νοήματα ὑπὸ τοῦ νοῦ), which are ‘over the many’ (ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς) and ‘posterior’ (ὕστερογενῆ). Finally, the divine (θεῖος) account (attributed to Herminus) emphasizes ‘realities’ (πράγματα), which are ‘from god’ (θεόθεν) and ‘before the many’ (πρὸ τῶν

πολλῶν), which is ‘the work of theology’ (θεολογίας γὰρ ἔργον τοῦτο).⁸³ The crucial manoeuvre here is not merely to treat the tripartite structure as indicative of a tripartite ontology, but to treat the correspondence as a methodological principle for the exegesis of its metaphysical implications.

The more problematic aspect of Iamblichus’ procedure lies in how to explain how universals as *post rem* predicables can have an intermediary role to play *between* realities and utterances, since they are explicitly posterior to the latter. The answer seems to lie in the apparent two-fold sense attributed to universals which appears to have given rise to the problem of the subject-matter of the *Categories* originally. Predicable *post rem* concepts are indeed posterior to the common properties of individuals, but what explains the fact they are predicable is itself prior to both. The presupposition that Aristotelian universals were conceived of as counterparts to Platonic Forms, performing the same explanatory work as the Forms (namely explaining the predicability of common properties), is one reason that the ‘problem of universals’ was taken to be a problem of differing accounts of universals as such at all.⁸⁴ However, a distinction between Forms as *explanatory* of the participation of numerically distinct individuals in common properties and predicable universals as ‘that which is predicated in common’ (τὸ κοινῇ κατηγορούμενον)⁸⁵ would seem to be not only a genuinely viable option in the development of the Neoplatonic harmonization of the two, but is in fact explicitly argued. Nor is it simply a matter of making an attempt not to attribute to the latter the explanatory function of the former, but instead a role complementary to it. In order to preclude the objection that the explanatory role performed by the former is complicated by the relation of participation, ‘that which participates’ (τὸ μετέχον), (2) ‘that which is participated in’ (τὸ μετεχόμενον), and (3) ‘that which is unparticipated’ (τὸ ἀμέθεκτον) are further distinguished.⁸⁶

If, then, universals are distinct from both Forms and particulars, how might Iamblichus align the three such that concepts might mediate realities and utterances?

Πᾶσα ὁλότης ἢ πρὸ τῶν μερῶν ἐστὶν ἢ ἐκ τῶν μερῶν ἢ ἐν τῷ μέρει. ἢ γὰρ ἐν τῇ αἰτία τὸ ἐκάστου θεωροῦμεν εἶδος, καὶ ὅλον ἐκεῖνο πρὸ τῶν μερῶν λέγομεν τὸ ἐν τῷ αἰτίῳ προϋποστάν· ἢ ἐν τοῖς μετέχουσιν αὐτῆς μέρεσι. καὶ τοῦτο διχῶς· ἢ γὰρ ἐν ἅπασιν ὁμοῦ τοῖς μέρεσι, καὶ ἔστι τοῦτο ἐκ τῶν μερῶν ὅλον, οὐ καὶ ὅτιοῦν μέρος ἀπὸν ἐλαττοῖ τὸ ὅλον· ἢ ἐν ἐκάστῳ τῶν μερῶν, ὡς καὶ τοῦ μέρους κατὰ μέθεξιν τοῦ ὅλου <ὅλου> γεγονότος, ὃ καὶ ποιεῖ τὸ μέρος εἶναι ὅλον μερικῶς. καθ’ ὕπαρξιν μὲν οὖν ὅλον τὸ ἐκ τῶν μερῶν· κατ’ αἰτίαν δὲ τὸ πρὸ τῶν μερῶν· κατὰ μέθεξιν δὲ τὸ ἐν τῷ μέρει. καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο κατ’ ἐσχάτην ὕφεσιν ὅλον, ἢ μιμεῖται τὸ ἐκ τῶν μερῶν ὅλον, ὅταν μὴ τὸ τυχόν ἢ μέρος, ἀλλὰ τῷ ὅλῳ δυνάμενον ἀφομοιοῦσθαι οὐ καὶ τὰ μέρη ὅλα ἐστίν.⁸⁷

Every whole is either a whole-before-the-parts, a whole-of-the-parts, or a whole-in-the-part. For either the form of each thing is surveyed in its cause, and we call that which subsists in its cause a whole prior to parts,

because it presubsists in the cause, or it is seen in the parts which participate of it. And this in a two-fold respect: for it is either seen in all the parts together, and this is a whole consisting of parts, any part of which being absent diminishes the whole, – or, it is seen in each of the parts, so that the part likewise becomes by participation a whole; which makes the part to be a whole partially. The whole, therefore, which is according to reality consists of parts; but the whole which is prior to parts is according to cause. And the whole which is in a part is according to participation: for this, likewise, according to an ultimate diminution or remission is a whole so far as it imitates the whole which consists of parts, since it is not any casual part, but that which is capable of being assimilated to a whole of which the parts likewise are wholes.⁸⁸

An Aristotelian universal, in this context, is ‘a whole consisting of parts’ (*τοῦτο ἐκ τῶν μερῶν ὅλον*) in contrast both to the Platonic Form, which is ‘a whole prior to parts’ (*ὅλον ἐκεῖνο πρὸ τῶν μερῶν*), and the particular, a ‘part <that> becomes by participation a whole’ (*τοῦ μέρους κατὰ μέθεξιν τοῦ ὅλου <ὅλου> γεγονότος*). In this case a particular (i.e. a part which becomes by participation a whole) participates in a universal (i.e. a whole consisting of parts) and the Form (i.e. a whole prior to parts) is unparticipated (*ἀμέθεκτον*). The difficulty addressed here is the apparent irreconcilability of immanence and transcendence of the Forms alluded to earlier.⁸⁹ It depends, however, on a conception of participated universals as both subsequent abstractions from particulars and prior Forms causally determinative of those particulars.

The distinctively Neoplatonic solution to this apparent incommensurability between the dual conception of participated universals lies in the role of the former in ‘procession’ (*πρόοδος*) and of the latter in ‘reversion’ (*ἐπιστροφή*).⁹⁰ The standard conception of dialectic among late Platonists was that it had four branches: definition (*ὀριστική*), division (*διαίρετική*), demonstration (*ἀποδεικτική*), and analysis (*ἀναλυτική*).⁹¹ Division is to ‘make the one into many’ (*τὸ ἓν πολλὰ ποιεῖν*); definition is to ‘collect many into one’ (*τὰ πολλὰ συνάγειν εἰς ἓν*).⁹² These two are then converse procedures. Demonstration ‘begins from causes and primary things’ (*ἀπὸ αἰτίων καὶ πρώτων ἀρχομένης*); analysis ‘begins from effects and secondary things’ (*ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτιατῶν καὶ δευτέρων ἄρχεται*), ‘for analysis is nothing if not the converse of demonstration’ (*οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀνάλυσις, εἰ μὴ ἀπόδειξις ἀντεστραμμένη*).⁹³ Analysis, that is, ‘concerns what is consequent to first principles’ (*περὶ δὲ τὰ μετὰ τὰς ἀρχὰς*) and ‘traces the desired result back to an acknowledged principle’ (*ἐπ’ ἀρχὴν ὁμολογουμένην ἀνάγουσα τὸ ζητούμενον*).⁹⁴

In analysis, then, starting with assertions about what is consequent to first principles – i.e. observable particulars – one proceeds upwards to acknowledged principles (‘analyse as far as the first things’, *ἀναλῶσαι μέχρι τῶν πρώτων*), at other times to accessory causes (*συναίτια*), sometimes to both (*ἀμφοτέρα*).⁹⁵ This species of analysis proceeding from effects to causes is therefore distinct from Aristotelian conceptions of syllogistic analysis, being the characteristically

Platonic process of ascent from the sensible to the intelligible. Strictly speaking, in hieroglyphic exegesis ascent through analysis is from the sensible particular to the intellectual content of the glyphs, which content is presumably to be thought of as an accessory cause, the first principles being the unified intelligible thoughts. In line with Iamblichean precedent, then, exegetical procedure is (i) to abstract from sensible phenomena to universal concepts, (ii) by analogy or allusion, (iii) by virtue of pre-eminent examples of Forms for the possibility of unified thought. The objects of Platonist interest are precisely those objects which legitimize the application of the procedure itself (Forms), rather than the items to which the procedure is applied (particulars), or the results of applying the procedure (predicables).

There might be thought to be some difficulty concerning how reversion can be fully realized if the productive principle is ‘more perfect’ (*τελειότερα*) than its effect.⁹⁶ In other words, how can analysis be possible if the starting-point of the ascent is a state of ontological subordination or inferiority, specifically as deficient in *ἐνέργεια*? The question is specifically addressed in a doctrine, which Olympiodorus attributes to Iamblichus, apparently undoing the earlier Neoplatonic doctrine of decreasing *ἐνέργεια* as emanation from the One approaches matter.

ὁ δὲ θεῖος Ἰάμβλιχος οὐ διακρίνει τὰ ὑψηλότερα ἀπὸ τῶν κοιλοτέρων τῇ πλείονι μεταδόσει (πάντα γὰρ ἄχρι τῆς ὕλης κάτεισι· δόγμα γὰρ ἐστίν, ἀφ’ οὗ ἂν τι ἄρξῃται ἐνεργεῖν μὴ παύεσθαι ἄχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων· εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἰσχυρότερόν ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ δύναται διὰ τῆς πόρρω διαστάσεως ἀντανίσωσις γίνεσθαι πρὸς τὸ ἀσθενέστερον), ἀλλὰ διακρίνει τῷ δριμυτέραν τὴν μετάδοσιν τῶν ὑψηλοτέρων εἶναι. μᾶλλον γὰρ ἐφιεμέθα εἶναι ἢ περ ζωῆς, καὶ μᾶλλον τοῦ ζῆν ἢ περ τοῦ νοεῖν.⁹⁷

The divine Iamblichus does not distinguish the higher things from the emptier by the greater exchange (for all things come down even as far as matter; for it is a point of doctrine that whatever it is from which anything begins to operate not cease even as far as the last things; for even if it is stronger, nonetheless through the onwards distension a balance is able to come into being with respect to the weaker thing), but he distinguishes [the two] by the *keener* exchange of the higher things. For we rather aim at that than even life, and rather at living than thinking.

Procession explicitly entails no diminishment of the productive principle.⁹⁸ Olympiodorus’ Iamblichean doctrine of ‘balance’ (*ἀντανίσωσις*) makes this possible without decreasing activity (*ἐνέργεια*) through ‘distension’ (*διαστάσις*) of ‘the stronger’ (*ἰσχυρότερόν*) to ‘the weaker’ (*ἀσθενέστερον*), also referred to as ‘exchange’ (*μετάδοσις*) of ‘the higher things’ (*τὰ ὑψηλότερα*) and ‘the lower things’ (*τὰ κοιλότερα*). Everything, he argues, descends as far as matter (*πάντα γὰρ ἄχρι τῆς ὕλης κάτεισι*). If emanation from the Neoplatonic One does not entail decreasing activity with proximity to the sensible realm, but extends whole as far as matter, then matter preserves *ἐνέργεια* undiminished

and therefore the bridge between the divine, conceptual, and material is traversable in *both* directions without loss. The tripartite Iamblichean ontology thereby describes a situation in which analysis undertaken on the basis of the work of natural science can result in a fully ‘energetic’ account of conceptual movements in the soul, on which further basis it can also result in an equally fully ‘energetic’ account of divine realities. It is possible to apply intellectual interpretation to the work of natural science unattenuated precisely because the latter is continuous with and complementary to the former, specifically in terms of balance of activity. On this account semantic theory is a matter of interest to Iamblichus not merely because it lends itself to being subsumed under the broader metaphysical framework within which he is operating, but precisely because properly conceived it presents a means of rational ascent to the first principles upon which meaning depends.

4.3 Neoplatonic hieroglyphics

Plotinus thinks the *Categories* a work of metaphysics concerning realities (πράγματα), on which reading he offers substantial criticism of Aristotle in ‘On the genera of being’ (Περὶ τῶν γενῶν τοῦ ὄντος).⁹⁹ Each reality, however, is not the particular (καθ’ ἑκάστον) individual (τόδε τι) of Porphyry’s account,¹⁰⁰ but the substance of the thing itself (τοῦ πράγματος καὶ τῆς οὐσίας).¹⁰¹ In a well-known passage in ‘On intelligible beauty’ (Περὶ τοῦ νοητοῦ κάλλους)¹⁰² Plotinus states that there is an individual hieroglyphic image for each thing (ἐν ἑκάστον ἐκάστου πράγματος ἄγαλμα) by which ‘to present the way there in truth’ (τὴν ἐκεῖ οὐ διέξοδον ἐμφῆναι).¹⁰³

Δοκοῦσι δέ μοι καὶ οἱ Αἰγυπτίων σοφοί, εἴτε ἀκριβεῖ ἐπιστήμῃ λαβόντες εἴτε καὶ συμφύτῳ, περὶ ὧν ἐβούλοντο διὰ σοφίας δεικνύναι, μὴ τύποις γραμμάτων διεξοδεύουσι λόγους καὶ προτάσεις μηδὲ μιμουμένοις φωνὰς καὶ προφορὰς ἀξιωματῶν κεχρηῆσθαι, ἀγάλματα δὲ γράψαντες καὶ ἐν ἑκάστον ἐκάστου πράγματος ἄγαλμα ἐντυπώσαντες ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς τὴν ἐκεῖ<ν>ου διέξοδον ἐμφῆναι, ὥς ἄρα τις καὶ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ σοφίᾳ ἑκάστον ἐστὶν ἄγαλμα καὶ ὑποκείμενον καὶ ἀθρόον καὶ οὐ διανόησις οὐδὲ βούλευσις.¹⁰⁴

Also those of the Egyptians who are wise seem to me, whether understanding by precise knowledge or by nature, concerning those things which they wanted to show through wisdom, not with types of letters laying out arguments and premisses nor those imitating utterances and articulations of propositions, but by describing images and engraving on the temples one each for each object to display the lay-out of that thing, for each image is a particular knowledge and wisdom and a unified entity and not discursive reason or will.

Each hieroglyphic image is a unified and particular entity in itself (ὑποκείμενον καὶ ἀθρόον) and a particular instance of knowledge and wisdom

(τις καὶ ἐπιστήμη καὶ σοφία ἑκάστον ἐστὶν ἄγαλμα). This use of hieroglyphs is furthermore without recourse to the use of discursive reason (διανόησις) and its typical expression in ‘arguments and premisses’ (λόγους καὶ προτάσεις) and writing which imitates ‘utterances and articulations of propositions’ (φωνὰς καὶ προφορὰς ἀξιωματῶν), but preserves the ontology of its object, which allows one to grasp the substrate (ὑποκείμενον) in its totality (ἅθροον).

The hieroglyphic example Plotinus provides here is a specific instance of the general principle that ‘a certain wisdom fashions all the things that are made, whether works of art or natural’ (πάντα δὴ τὰ γινόμενα, εἴτε τεχνητὰ εἴτε φυσικὰ εἴη, σοφία τις ποιεῖ). The wisdom of the artist guides the production of the work. The artist himself is also generated (γεγέννηται) in accordance with the wisdom of nature. This principle in nature (λόγον ἐν τῇ φύσει) is either ‘of itself’ (ἐξ αὐτοῦ) or is generated by the further principle of intellect (ὁ νοῦς ἐγέννησε τὴν σοφίαν).¹⁰⁵

This distinction between ‘discursive’ (διανόησις) and ‘intellective’ (νοῦς) thought is intended to overcome the objection to the Platonic doctrine of Forms levelled by means of the ‘Third Man’ argument, but also responds to the sceptical objections to which the Stoic position appeared to lend itself.¹⁰⁶ The Stoic position is liable to sceptical objections because it relies on to the idea that the distinctive faculty of the soul is discursive reason. That is, insofar as the conceptual apparatus for discursive reason is the product of repeated exposure to the causal influence of objects on the soul resulting in the formation of concepts organized as experience, some further condition or criterion is required by which to judge whether or not the evidential relation itself might reasonably be inferred. To that extent the objects of (Stoic) discursive reason are external to itself and therefore liable to the standard sceptical objections concerning the possibility of establishing any non-recursive connection between what is observed in perception as *evidence* on the basis of which inferences about objects might be made. In order to preserve the possibility of knowledge, Platonists argue that knowledge is by (non-material) intellect and of intelligibles with which it can be identical.¹⁰⁷ Plotinus’ account explicitly focuses on the significative possibilities of hieroglyphic language for such intelligibles – as distinct from language concerning the sensible world. His aim appears to be to secure a form of non-discursive language which will advertise the fact (against potential sceptical objections) that knowledge is not based on sense-perception.¹⁰⁸ The third strand of my argument, then, concerns the relationship between ‘intellective’ (νοερά) and ‘discursive’ (διανοητική) thought as treated in the Porphyrian reflexes of Aristotelian semantics.

An obvious objection is that the possibility of non-discursive thought expressed through hieroglyphs is excluded precisely by virtue of the sensible nature of the hieroglyphs themselves. If hieroglyphs are not to be subject to sceptical objections based on causal relations between world and language inhering in discursive thought, then there is an apparent need for some possibility of synthesizing hieroglyphs with the objects of ‘intellective’ (νοερά) thought which accommodates their materiality within a broader framework.¹⁰⁹

One possible answer to this might be not to allow Plotinus' reflections on discursive and intellective language to form part of the analysis of the *Categories* at all, by reading Aristotle as offering an exclusively semantic as opposed to metaphysical account. Porphyry may then have deliberately omitted any introduction of the Forms into his semantics in order to leave room for the possibility of the synthesis of the Aristotelian account with the Platonic. One way to achieve this is by characterizing the Platonic endeavour as proceeding from the intelligible to the sensible and the Aristotelian endeavour as proceeding from the sensible to the intelligible,¹¹⁰ the causal-semantic sequence expression-concept-object (*φωνή-νόημα-πρᾶγμα*) can be brought into correspondence with the Neoplatonic hypostases the psychic-intelligible-divine (*τὸ ψυχικόν-τὸ νοερόν-τὸ θεῖον*).¹¹¹ In so doing, the possibility of situating hieroglyphics in an intermediate (rather than terminal) position and thus attributing to them a mediating role in the process is provided for along lines I describe next.

There is, however, another possibility that better recognizes the broader aim of the treatise in which the passage appears that acknowledges the fact that images – including hieroglyphic images – are here presented not simply as perceptible objects, but as perceptible representations of perceptible objects. Historically, the fact of the aesthetic role of hieroglyphs in the composition of tableaux in bas-reliefs is hard to ignore, and it is possible to suppose that Plotinus here is simply true to that historical, aesthetic, and epistemological role such images played. Images as greater than the sum of the phenomenal objects they depict is all the same a remarkable conception of images to develop in a Platonist context. Plato had conceived both images mimetic of sensible particulars as thereby ontologically dependent on the objects they are images of, and had also thought writing ontologically secondary to speech. Here, on the contrary, we have Plotinus on written images as ontologically privileged, despite being sensible items themselves, over the spoken word that presents states of affairs discursively, because, precisely by virtue of being an image, non-discursive.

It will take a moment's reflection to unravel what 'non-discursive' might mean in this context. If we are to understand discursive language as standing in some relation with states-of-affairs in the sensible world such that propositions might be determined to be either true or false by reference to them, then the verisimilitude of discursive language stands explicitly in a relationship of dependency with respect to those sensible states-of-affairs. Direct depiction of the objects forming the themes of such states-of-affairs might be supposed to overcome limitations of a conventionalist linguistic resource by providing it with naturalistic credentials that, say, Greek could not claim.¹¹² This alone seems less likely to appeal to a Platonist than it might at first appear, since it serves only to further highlight the ontological dependency of the representation on the original after which it is fashioned. Whilst the necessary relation with primary causes is maintained on the basis that mimetic images are perceptible and perceptible things are things that come into being by virtue of prior intelligibles, the downwards ontological trajectory from sensible particulars is a problem for any possibility of epistemological reversion in the direction of

those prior intelligibles. However, they do have a structural role to play. For sensible creatures in the sensible cosmos, Forms can be apprehended only by analogy.¹¹³ Therefore, justified by analogy with perceptible things *as perceptually presented*, aesthetic objects are sensible images so arranged as to make it possible to apprehend the relevant analogy and thus secure the requisite epistemological advantage.

So the answer to the question as to how the aesthetic object achieves its epistemological objective seems to be that the aesthetic object *re-presents* the perceptible object of which it is the image *as* a perceptible object. The apprehensible content of the perception of an image of an Egyptian vulture includes, besides the content that it is an Egyptian vulture, the further apprehensible content *that it is perceptible* (as opposed that is, to intelligible).

‘Non-discursive’ in this context might then refer to the fact that its meaning is not explanatorily interdependent with its referent in the manner of Porphyrian representative or conceptually semantic content of the kind we saw earlier. It is rather symbolic, in two senses. First, it is secondary to such relations of conceptual interdependence in that it presupposes them. The conceptual connection between a vulture and an image of a vulture is a necessary prerequisite to our understanding of such an image *qua* perceptible, as opposed to the intelligible nature of a vulture. But, second, *because* contrastive both to those conceptual presuppositions, and the intelligible nature of the object depicted, it is *thereby* capable of the analogical function.

The movement is therefore away from the conception of meaning as a matter of an isolated, sign-intrinsic phenomenon, through meaning as an organized whole, simultaneously contingent and subsistent, inclusive of the reasons for and implications of that deployment, in line with the *contrastive* purpose with which it is so deployed such that the overall operative conception of the aesthetic image is retrospectively elucidated within a broader conception of what it is to be such an image. This, I take it, is a wholly consistent development of Plotinus’ explicit claim that hieroglyphic *ἁγάλματα* non-discursively present (*ἐμφεῖναι*) particular intelligible truths as a *unified whole*.

Though Plotinus had not provided any exegesis of the ‘particular knowledge and wisdom’ (*τις καὶ ἐπιστήμη καὶ σοφία*) that hieroglyphic *ἁγάλματα* afford, Iamblichus enthusiastically obliges, specifically employing the intellective interpretative method to do so. Iamblichus’ introduction of intellective interpretation (*νοερὰ θεωρία*), directed towards a theology to complement the natural scientific and logical accounts he finds in his predecessors, was investigated to establish the kind of metaphysical knowledge such hieroglyphic language might be thought to afford.

Ἄκουε δὴ οὖν καὶ σὺ κατὰ τὸν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων νοῦν τὴν τῶν συμβόλων νοερὰν διερμηνεύσιν, ἀφείς μὲν τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς φαντασίας καὶ τῆς ἀκοῆς εἶδωλον αὐτῶν τῶν συμβολικῶν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν νοερὰν ἀλήθειαν ἑαυτὸν ἐπαναγαγών.¹¹⁴

Hear, therefore, the intellective interpretation of the symbols, according to Egyptian thought: banish the image of the symbolic things themselves, which depends on imagination and hearsay, and raise yourself up towards the intellectual truth.¹¹⁵

The task here is therefore to apply the distinctively Iamblichean strategy of mapping a tripartite Neoplatonic ontology of universals onto the tripartite semantic theory to the case of hieroglyphs.

Iamblichus introduces three samples of hieroglyphic exegesis.¹¹⁶ First, by ‘mud’ (*ἰλύς*) one apprehends (*νόει*) ‘everything corporeally-formed and material’ (*τὸ σωματοειδὲς πᾶν καὶ ὑλικόν*), which is nonetheless not sensible itself, but intelligible: ‘the originating cause of the elements and of all the powers relating to the elements, which subsisted before in correspondence to a foundation’ (*τῶν στοιχείων καὶ τῶν περὶ τοῖς στοιχείοις δυνάμεων πασῶν ἀρχηγὸν αἴτιον ἐν πυθμένος λόγῳ προὔποκείμενον*). Second, by ‘sitting above the lotus-blossom’ (*τὸ ἐπὶ λωτῷ καθέζεσθαι*), exaltation above the *ἰλύς* since, in common with the motion of the mind, lotus leaves are circular – the uniform principle of life for Pythagoreans and Hermes alike. Third, by ‘one sailing in a boat’ (*ὁ δ’ ἐπὶ πλοίου ναυτιλλόμενος*), ‘the power that directs the world’ (*τὴν διακυβερνῶσαν τὸν κόσμον ἐπικράτειαν*) as does God, who ‘from above, imparts without division from the first principles of Nature, the first-operative causes of motions’ (*ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων ἀρχῶν τῆς φύσεως τὰς πρωτουργοὺς αἰτίας τῶν κινήσεων ἀμεριστῶς ἐνδίδωσι*).

How does the process of intellective interpretation achieve its contribution to an understanding of hieroglyphs, and how is it developed from the tripartite conception of universals? On a Porphyrian logical (*λογικός*) account, the tripartition would distinguish, the particular (e.g. a particular large thing), the Aristotelian universal (the predicable ‘largeness’), and the Platonic Form (largeness itself). However, Iamblichus’ example, ‘mud’ (*ἰλύς*), is not interpreted as a particular sample of mud, the concept ‘mud’, and mud itself. One possible avenue of explanation lies in the phrase ‘the image of the symbols themselves’ (*εἰδωλὸν αὐτῶν τῶν συμβολικῶν*). Though a hieroglyph is an image, it is a symbolic image, so that it is the symbol of which it is an image to which the interpretation applies, not any material particular – neither the image itself, nor the thing it depicts. If, then, the exegesis provides the ‘intellective’ content of the symbol, then the image of the symbol is an image of that ‘intellective’ content.

So, on a Porphyrian semantic account, on the one hand, the image of mud just is the written form of the utterance ‘mud’, the meaning (i.e. conceptual content) of which is *mud*, referring to particular mud, which participates in the intelligible Form of mud. As a symbol, however, standing in need of interpretation, it is not the logical relationship between the three ‘universals’ that is explained in intellective interpretation, but the metaphysical relationship between the originating cause of materiality and material particulars. The difference between the Greek word (*ἰλύς*) and the Egyptian image is precisely that

the former is an image of a linguistic expression (i.e. a particular), whereas the image of a symbol in the form of a hieroglyph is an image of the ‘intellectual’ content that constitutes the symbol. If linguistic utterances, then, constitute an appropriate medium with which to give expression to the phenomena of sensible phenomena, how is it, one might ask, that the appropriate medium with which to give expression to intelligible objects is hieroglyphics?

The gifts proper to incorporeal life, Iamblichus tells us, are themselves intellectual: virtue and wisdom.¹¹⁷ These are appropriate offerings to ‘those gods that are in and of themselves uniform’ (τοὺς αὐτοὺς καθ’ ἑαυτοὺς μονοειδεῖς ὄντας). Similarly, ‘natural forces’ (φυσικὰς δυνάμεις) are appropriate for ‘a mode of worship which is suited to nature’ (τὴν θρησκείαν . . . τῇ φύσει πρόσφορον).¹¹⁸ Finally, there is the intermediate form of theurgic operation, appropriate to which are intermediate offerings.

*Καὶ μὴν τοῖς γε μέσοις καὶ τῶν μέσων ἡγεμονοῦσιν ἀγαθῶν ἐνίοτε μὲν ἂν διπλᾷ δῶρα συναρμόσειεν, ἐνίοτε δ’ ἂν ἐπίκοινα πρὸς ἀμφοτέρα ταῦτα, ἢ καὶ ἀποσχιζόμενα μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν κάτω πρὸς δὲ τὰ ὑψηλότερα ἀνήκοντα, ἢ πάντως ἐνὶ γε τῶν τρόπων συμπληροῦντα τὴν μεσότητα.*¹¹⁹

And further, the intermediate entities, which administer median goods, will sometimes be suitably served by a double set of gifts, sometimes by gifts common to both levels, or again by gifts that signal a breaking-away from the lower and an accession to the higher, or at any rate those that fulfil this median role in one way or another.¹²⁰

The distinction appears to be that, while the ‘goods of the soul’ are properly immaterial and linguistic utterances are properly material, hieroglyphs are quite literally ‘compounds’ (συνθήματα) of the two: intellectual content and material images. As such, hieroglyphs are the appropriate medium for intermediate theurgic operations directed towards ‘the intermediate entities’ (τοῖς γε μέσοις).¹²¹ The ‘intellectual’ content of the symbol, therefore, is only one constituent part of it. Hieroglyphs are also properly material.

*πᾶσα γὰρ ἢ διὰ λόγου γινώσκεις τῶν ὄντων ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν τοῖς οὖσιν ἔχει τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας καταληπτικόν (καὶ γὰρ νοημάτων ἐφάπτεται καὶ ἐν νοήσεσιν ὑφέστηκεν). οἱ δὲ θεοὶ πάντων εἰσὶν ἐπέκεινα τῶν ὄντων. οὔτε οὖν δοξαστὸν τὸ θεῖον οὔτε διανοητὸν οὔτε νοητόν. πᾶν γὰρ τὸ ὄν ἢ αἰσθητόν ἐστι, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δοξαστόν· ἢ ὄντως ὄν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο νοητόν· ἢ μεταξὺ τούτων, ὄν ἅμα καὶ γενητόν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο διανοητόν.*¹²²

For all rational knowledge, inasmuch as it grasps intelligible notions and consists in acts of intellection, is knowledge of real existents and apprehends truth by an organ which is itself a real existent; but the gods are beyond all existents. Accordingly the divine is an object neither of opinion nor of discursive reason nor yet of intellection: for all that exists is either sensible, and therefore an object of opinion; or true Being, and therefore an

object of intellection; or of intermediate rank, at once Being and thing of process, and therefore object of discursive reason.¹²³

By this account, then, hieroglyphic Egyptian, which is ‘at once Being and thing of process’ (ὄν ἅμα καὶ γενητόν) and therefore amenable to ‘intellective interpretation’ (νοερὰ θεωρία), is neither ‘an object of opinion’ (δοξαστόν), nor ‘an object of intellection’ (νοητόν), but ‘an object of discursive reason’ (διανοητόν). In this it is unlike Greek, which is purely ‘sensible’ (αἰσθητόν), and therefore ‘an object of opinion’, though one might presumably apply the ‘analytic function’ (ἡ δύναμις τῆς ἀναλυτικῆς) of dialectic to Greek such that it ‘sometimes analytically comes to the causes, other times to the accessory causes, sometimes to both’ (τοτὲ μὲν ὥς ἐπὶ τὰ αἴτια γίγνεται ἀναλυτικῶς, τοτὲ δὲ ὥς ἐπὶ συναίτια, τοτὲ δὲ ὥς ἐπ’ ἀμφοτέρα).¹²⁴

One plausible way the distinction between doxastic and discursive might be clarified is in terms of the prior intelligibility requisite for predicative thought, as distinguished in the discussion of Neoplatonic semantics in Chapter 2. Predicative thought is just that kind of thought in which claims are made about sensible phenomena with prior intelligibility; i.e. it is doxastic in an ordinary (i.e. non-technical) sense. Discursive thought is just that thought that is made possible through the grasping of sensible phenomena as amenable to analysis in terms of rational relations between propositions composed of nominal and predicative terms. However, hieroglyphic Egyptian differs from Greek not merely by virtue of signifying these discursive rational relations, which after all is something of which (philosophically informed) Greek is also capable. On the contrary, as we saw earlier, according to Plotinus’ account the unique virtue of hieroglyphic lies in its presenting that content *non-discursively*. That being so, the specific manner in which hieroglyphs are ‘at once Being and thing of process’ must be subject to further qualification.

I think that qualification can be discerned in the Proclus passage cited previously. In contrast to conventional Greek forms of expression, which correspond to and represent a doxastically available state of affairs, a hieroglyph is a non-discursive image of content that is nonetheless *accessible through* proper (i.e. Platonically correct) discursive exegesis. In other words, being of ‘intermediate rank’ (μεταξὺ τούτων) does not entail that hieroglyphic is itself ‘discursive’ (διανοητικόν), only that it is ‘capable of being discursively thought’ (διανοητόν). If, however, the content of a hieroglyph is expressible in an exegesis in Greek, then the question arises as to why the hieroglyph was originally necessary to express that content at all. If hieroglyphs are ‘compounds’ (συνθήματα), however, part material image and part intellectual content, in contrast to a wholly material medium of linguistic expression (spoken and written Greek), then the content of the hieroglyph does have content that Greek can express, but the latter is also *causally dependent* on the prior ontological status of the glyph. The Greek exegesis of the intellectual content of a hieroglyph preserves the content of the symbol in discursive form only. In providing the intellective

interpretation of a hieroglyph, Iamblichus then supplies a discursive and dependent account of what a hieroglyph delivers non-discursively at a higher order of ontological integrity. A hieroglyph is susceptible of or amenable to discursive thought precisely because it can be given discursive elaboration in the Greek of the exegeses. However, the Greek is no substitute for the Egyptian insofar as it necessarily lacks the ability to provide the ontological unity of the original of which it is a purely logical interpretation. Intellective interpretation in this sense is not an interpretation which is itself intellective, but an interpretation of the intellective content which properly belongs to the hieroglyph it interprets.

Non-discursive hieroglyphics can therefore be assimilated to both the hieratic aspect of the *De mysteriis* in particular and to Neoplatonic philosophical preoccupations more generally. Also, despite Damascius' claim that specifically hieratic and philosophical focusses are contrastive,¹²⁵ the development of such assimilation is not, it would seem, a feature confined to the later pagan Platonists to whom he attributes it. Porphyry – who, according to Damascius, prefers philosophy – had himself been explicit on the point that the various levels of divinity necessitated their appropriate levels of worship. He had, in fact, characterized this appropriacy particularly in terms of linguistic appropriacy in the case of both 'the god who is above all things' (θεῶν μὲν τῶ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν), for whom 'neither vocal language nor internal speech is appropriate' (οὐδὲ λόγος τούτῳ ὁ κατὰ φωνὴν οἰκεῖος),¹²⁶ and the 'intelligible gods' (νοητοῖς δὲ θεοῖς), to whom 'hymns recited orally are also to be offered' (τὴν ἐκ τοῦ λόγου ὕμνωδίαν προσθετέον).¹²⁷ To the lower order, material offerings such as meat and drink are appropriate.¹²⁸

Parallel with my earlier efforts to situate the *Hieroglyphica* within the twin Egyptian and Hellenic hieroglyphic traditions, it is essential here to read Horapollo's text in the context of both Neoplatonic semantic theory and its metaphysical corollaries as characterized earlier. In situating the text in this particular line of development, however, the understanding of semantics the text exhibits – partly in content, but also structurally – has, I think, been wholly neglected. By examining in particular the method of interpreting the meaning of hieroglyphic signs by reference to philosophically higher order metaphysical objects to which they allude, the following chapter is intended to redress that neglect in light of the foregoing discussion.

Notes

- 1 Cf., for example, the case of Synesius of Cyrene and related cases of bridge-building between Christian and pagan views, as well as more straightforward cases of forced accommodation: Horapollo himself, and Heraiscus.
- 2 Crum, W. E., *A Coptic Dictionary / compiled with the help of many scholars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939).
- 3 Richter, T. S., 'Lexical Borrowing Into Coptic: The Other Story' (abstract from inaugural conference of the DDGLC project, Linguistic Borrowing into Coptic) (Leipzig, 26–28th April 2010) [URL: <https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/942602/file/942615> accessed May 11th 2017].

- 4 Cherix, P., 'Index grec-copte' (2008–2010, V.10, 180 p.) [URL: <http://coptica.ch/Cherix-Indexgrec10.pdf> accessed May 11th 2017].
- 5 Förster, H., *Wörterbuch der griechischen Wörter in koptischen dokumentarischen Texten* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002).
- 6 Richter (2010).
- 7 See Orlandi, T., 'Literature, Coptic' in Atiya, A.S., (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia* (New York: Macmillan 1991), vol. 5: pp. 1450–1460; Gee, J., 'An Overview of Coptic Literature' (Draft: 15th April 2002) [URL: <http://www.coptic.org/language/overview.pdf> accessed May 1th 2017].
- 8 In this regard, he is acting as did Macarius against Kothos at the temple in Antaiopolis, and Apa Moïse at the temple of Apollo at Abydos.
- 9 Maspero, J., 'Horapollon et la fin du paganisme égyptien' in *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, Vol. 11 (1914): p. 185.
- 10 This had also been the case in Alexandria: see Rémondon, R., 'L'Égypte et la suprême résistance au christianisme (Ve–VIIe siècles)' in *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*, Vol. 51 (1952): pp. 63–78.
- 11 Bell, D. N., *Besa: The Life of Shenoute* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1983): pp. 77–78.
- 12 Athanassiadi, P., 'Persecution and Response in Late Paganism: The Evidence of Damascius' in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 113 (1993): pp. 1–29.
- 13 The identity of the group responsible for the treatises' collation and the reasons for their burial will be considered later in an effort to bring their contents into the broader context of Coptic literature of the period.
- 14 Young, D. W., 'The Milieu of Nag Hammadi: Some Historical Considerations' in *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (May, 1970): pp. 127–137.
- 15 Emmel, S., *Shenoute's Literary Corpus* (2 vol.) (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, vol. 599–600, subsidia tom. 111–112) (Lovanii: in Aedibus Peeters, 2004) whence all subsequent manuscript references.
- 16 Young, D. W., 'A Monastic Invective Against Egyptian Hieroglyphs' (=TY 3/4 and 13/14) in Young, D. W., (ed.), *Studies Presented to Hans Jakob Polotsky* (Beacon Hill and East Gloucester: Pirtle and Polson, 1981): pp. 348–360 (acephalous work A6) = DD 245:1–[ca. 251: ult.] (lection); TY [1]–[ca. 53]; ZW [1]–[ca. 54].
- 17 *ⲧⲣⲙⲟⲓⲛⲉ* = *I Am Amazed* = *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos* (W54, Discourses 7, Work 5) = DQ [1]–[ca. 148]; DS [ca. 60]–222:2.11; DT [between 82 and 87]–[between 88 and 163] (lection); HB [1]–[ca. 150]; XE [ca. 127]–[ca. 263]; XN [wanting, except for the incipit in the table of contents, 270:1.19]; YU [1]–[ca. 128]; ZN frg. 1; Vienna inc. 54. References are to Orlandi's edition and Italian translation of the text [Orlandi, T., *Shenute contra Origenistas: testo con introduzione e traduzione* (Roma: C.I.M., 1985)]. A more recent edition with German translation is available in Cristea, H.-J., *Shenute von Atripe: Contra Origenistas* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 60) (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011) which preserves the numeration of Orlandi's earlier edition.
- 18 *ⲉⲓⲛⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉⲓⲁⲛⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ* = *As I Sat on a Mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?) = cod. A (HB 261:1.5–268), cod. B (XN 227–240), cod. C (XN 259–270), cod. D (HB 305–306) = No. 18 (pp. 44–62), *Ad philosophum gentilem*. Leipoldt, J., with the assistance of Crum, W. E., *Sinuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia* [3 volumes (numbered 1, 3, and 4)] (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, volumes 41, 42, and 73 (Copt. 1 [= 2.2.T], 2 [= 2.4.T], 5 [= 2.5.T])) (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1906–1913).
- 19 Emmel (2004), vol. 2: pp. 688–689.
- 20 Sinuthius, *A Monastic Invective Against Egyptian Hieroglyphs* (acephalous work A6): TY 3.1.25–24.1.14.
- 21 Young (1981): pp. 348–360.
- 22 Orlandi, T., 'A Catechesis Against Apocryphal Texts by Shenute and the Gnostic Texts of Nag Hammadi' in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Jan., 1982): pp. 85–95.

- Sinuthius, ⲥⲣⲙⲟⲓⲛⲉ = *I Am Amazed* = *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos* (W54, Discourses 7, Work 5): HB 39.2–41.1; Orlandi (1985): §§384–388.
- 23 *Ibid.*, (1985): §§401–403.
- 24 See Wolfson, H. A., ‘Clement of Alexandria on the Generation of the Logos’ in *Church History*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (June, 1951): pp. 72–81.
- 25 Orlandi (1985): §326.
- 26 See Chapter 3, section 3.3, for Horapollon on inferential argumentation from the phenomena of the generated world.
- 27 Wolfson (Jun., 1951): pp. 72–81.
- 28 Orlandi (1985): §331; §§359–360.
- 29 Orlandi (1985): p. 45.
- 30 Sinuthius, $\text{ⲉⲓⲛⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉⲓⲭⲛⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ}$ = *As I sat on a mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?): HB 261/2; 18.44.18–23.
- 31 Leipoldt (1906–1913): 18.262.45.3–6.
- 32 Sinuthius, $\text{ⲉⲓⲛⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉⲓⲭⲛⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ}$ = *As I sat on a mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?): HB 262; 18.45.3–6.
- 33 Sinuthius, $\text{ⲉⲓⲛⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉⲓⲭⲛⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ}$ = *As I sat on a mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?): HB 262; 18.232.50.
- 34 Sinuthius, $\text{ⲉⲓⲛⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉⲓⲭⲛⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ}$ = *As I sat on a mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?): HB 262; 18.264.45.27–266.47.2.
- 35 Sinuthius, $\text{ⲉⲓⲛⲙⲟⲟⲥ ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲉⲓⲭⲛⲟⲩⲧⲟⲟⲩ}$ = *As I sat on a mountain* = *Ad philosophum gentilem* (T21, from Discourses 1, 2, or 3?): XN 230/1; 18.49.8–31.
- 36 Sinuthius, ⲥⲣⲙⲟⲓⲛⲉ = *I Am Amazed* = *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos* (W54, Discourses 7, Work 5), HB 39.2–41.1; Orlandi (1985): §331, §403.
- 37 Sinuthius, ⲥⲣⲙⲟⲓⲛⲉ = *I Am Amazed* = *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos* (W54, Discourses 7, Work 5): HB 39.2–41.1; Orlandi (1985): §415.
- 38 Young, D. W., ‘The Milieu of Nag Hammadi: Some Historical Considerations’ in *Vigiliae Christianae*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (May, 1970): pp. 127–137; Orlandi, T., ‘A Catechesis Against Apocryphal Texts by Shenute and the Gnostic Texts of Nag Hammadi’ in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Jan., 1982): pp. 85–95.
- 39 Orlandi, T., ‘A Catechesis Against Apocryphal Texts by Shenute and the Gnostic Texts of Nag Hammadi’ in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 75, No. 1 (Jan., 1982): pp. 93–95.
- 40 Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3.11.9: *Hi vero, qui sunt a Valentino, iterum existentes extra omnem timorem, suas conscriptiones proferentes, plura habere gloriantur, quam sint ipsa Evangelia. Si quidem in tantum processerunt audaciae, uti quod ab his non olim conscriptum est, Veritatis Evangelium titulent, in nihilo conveniens Apostolorum Evangeliiis, ut nec Evangelium quidem sit apud eos sine blasphemia. Si enim, quod ab eis profertur, veritatis est Evangelium, dissimile est autem hoc illis, quae ab Apostolis nobis tradita sunt; qui volunt, possunt discere, quemadmodum ex ipsis Scripturis ostenditur, jam non esse id, quod ab Apostolis traditum est, veritatis Evangelium.*
- 41 Attridge, H. W., and MacRae, G., *The Coptic Gnostic Library. Volume I: Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex)* (Nag Hammadi Studies 22) (Leiden: Brill, 1985). Volume editor and contributor (*Gospel of Truth*, with George MacRae, and the *Tripartite Tractate*, with Elaine Pagles): p. 38.
- 42 Nag^ⲥ-Hammâdi codices I, 3, ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲓⲛⲉⲓⲟⲛ ⲛⲧⲙⲛⲉ = *The Gospel of Truth* = *Evangelium veritatis* 17.36 and 18.14–16.
- 43 Nag^ⲥ-Hammâdi codices I, 3, ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲓⲛⲉⲓⲟⲛ ⲛⲧⲙⲛⲉ = *The Gospel of Truth* = *Evangelium veritatis* 22.38–23.18 and Motte, L., ‘L’hiéroglyphe, d’Esna à l’Évangile de Vérité’ in *Deuxième Journée d’Études Coptes*, Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte 3 (Louvain, Paris: Peeters, 1984).
- 44 Nag^ⲥ-Hammâdi codices I, 3, ⲡⲉⲩⲁⲓⲛⲉⲓⲟⲛ ⲛⲧⲙⲛⲉ = *The Gospel of Truth* = *Evangelium veritatis* 22.38–23.18.
- 45 Attridge and MacRae (1985): p. 91.
- 46 That Plotinus (*Enneades* 3.8, 5.8, 5.5, and 2.9) mounted a concerted attack on Gnostics and yet makes explicit use of this conception of written characters in explanation of

- hieroglyphic Egyptian at *Enneades* 5.8 precludes the notion that the latter is itself of Valentinian provenance despite the use to which it is put in context.
- 47 Cf. Nag⁵-Hammâdi codices I, 3, *πεγαγγελιον ν̄τμνε* = The Gospel of Truth = *Evangelium veritatis* 19.34–20.1: *αφογωνε̄ αβαλ̄ ε̄μ̄ πογρη̄τ̄ ν̄βῑ πιλωωμε̄ ετανε̄ ν̄τε̄ νετανε̄ πεεῑ ετση̄ ερηεῑ· ε̄μ̄ πιμεε̄γε̄· ογαε̄μ̄ πινογς̄ [ν̄τε̄ π]ιωτ̄·* ‘in their hearts appeared the living book of the living, which is written in the Father’s thought and intellect’.
- 48 Nag⁵-Hammâdi codices VI, 6, *πωαδε̄ ν̄τμαε̄ωμογνε̄ μ̄ν̄ τμαε̄γ̄ιτε̄* = *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth* 61.18–63.32; Attridge, H. W., and Parrott, D. M., *The Coptic Gnostic Library. Volume III: Nag Hammadi Codex VI* (Nag Hammadi Studies 27) (Leiden: Brill, 1991).
- 49 Sinuthius, *τ̄ρμο̄ιζε̄* = *I Am Amazed* = *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos* (W54, Discourses 7, Work 5): HB 39.2–41.1; Orlandi (1985): §331; §403.
- 50 Porphyry, *Contra Christianos* (fragmenta) 39.1–46 = Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* 6.19.2 ff.; 54.1–10 = Macarius, *Apocriticus seu Μονογενής* 4.8.
- 51 Damascius, *In Phaedonem* (versio 1) 172.1–3.
- 52 Plotinus, *Enneades* 5.8.6.10–11. The suggestion originates in a note to a translation of the passage made in Малеванский, Г. В., *Плотин. Сочинения. Плотин в русских переводах* (СПб: 1995).
- 53 Porphyry, *Vita Pythagorae* 11.9–12.4.
- 54 This would be in a manner consistent with Plotinus’ usage as described in section 4.3, in this chapter.
- 55 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.1.13–16: *εἰκότως καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸν πρόσφορον αὐτῆς τρόπον τῆς κεκρυμμένης ἐν τοῖς συμβόλοις μυσταγωγίας προφέρουσιν*.
- 56 Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem* 2.10a.4–6.
- 57 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.4.4–5.
- 58 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.5.57–58.
- 59 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.1.1–16.
- 60 Clarke, E. C., Dillon, J. M., and Hershbelle, J. M., *Iamblichus: On the Mysteries* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003): p. 291.
- 61 Van der Horst, P., *Chaeremon: Egyptian Priest and Stoic Philosopher* (Leiden: Brill, 1987 [2nd edn]); Le Boulluec, A., *Les Stromates V* (2 vol.) (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1981).
- 62 Chaeremon, *Fragmenta* 12 (= Tzetzes, *Exegesis in Iliadem* 1.97).
- 63 Fragm. 5 = Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem* 2.12–13 = Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.4.1–2.
- 64 Fragm. 21D = Porphyry, *De abstinencia* 4.9 = Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.4.8–14.
- 65 Fragm. 5 = Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem* 2.12–13 = Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.4.1–2.
- 66 With parallels in fragm. 6 (= Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.9.15), fragm. 7 (= Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.13.8), fragm. 8 (= Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem* 2.15), and fragm. 9 = Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 8.4) where, Van der Horst notes (p. 55), Iamblichus claims that the *Salmeschiniaca* are Hermetic writings, though claiming Chaeremon is opposed to astrology. For the use of the decans of the zodiac as explanations of gods, cf. Egyptian astrological calendars, possibly of Babylonian origin.
- 67 Fragm. 17D (= Porphyry, *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων* fragm. 10 = Eusebius *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.11.45–13.2) shows additional parallels with fragm. 5 (= Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem* 2.12–13 = Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.4.1–2), fragm. 21D (= Porphyry, *De abstinencia* 4.9 = Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 3.4.8–14), 25D (= Horapollon, *Hieroglyphica*), and 26D (= Joannes Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 12.723–736), as well as test. 9 (= Porphyry, *Contra Christianos* fragm. 39). Fragm. 12 (= Joannes Tzetzes, *Exegesis in Iliadem* 1.97) also shows parallels with fragm. 21D and 25D in addition to 19D (= Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.7.41–43) and 20D (= Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5.4.20–21).
- 68 Porphyry, *Epistula ad Anebonem* 2.12b.1–5.
- 69 Van der Horst, P., (ed.), *Chaeremon: Egyptian Priest and Stoic Philosopher* (Leiden: Brill, 1987 [2nd edn]): p. 15.

- 70 Porphyry, *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων* 10.18–23.
- 71 Van der Horst (1987 [2nd edn]): p. 29 (substituting ‘signify’ for ‘symbolize’).
- 72 Porphyry, *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων* 10.81–85.
- 73 Van der Horst (1987 [2nd edn]): p. 31.
- 74 Porphyry, *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων* 10.28–30: *Τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ δύνανται Δημήτηρ παρ' Ἑλλήσι καὶ Ἰσις παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις· καὶ πάλιν Κόρη παρ' Ἑλλήσι καὶ Διόνυσος, καὶ Ἰσις καὶ Ὅσιρις παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις.*
- 75 We can attribute this to the explicit and directly comparable ‘Middle’ Platonic precedent of Plutarch’s interpretation of various elements of Egyptian religion and their relation to theosophical speculation. Cf. Brenk, F. E., “‘Isis is a Greek Word’”. Plutarch’s Allegorization of Egyptian Religion’, Jiménez, A. P., López, J. G. and Aguilar, R. M., (eds.), *Plutarco, Platón y Aristóteles in Actas del V Congreso Internacional de la Internatinal Plutarch Society* (Madrid-Cuenca, 4–7 de mayo de 1999) (Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 1999): pp. 227–237 and Richter, D. S., ‘Plutarch on Isis and Osiris: Text, Cult, and Cultural Appropriation’ in *Transactions of the American Philological Association* Vol. 131 (2001): pp. 191–216.
- 76 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.5.1–19.
- 77 I.e. Platonists. Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.209.11.
- 78 See Barnes, J., ‘Meaning, Saying, Thinking’ in Döring, K. and Ebert, Th. (eds.), *Dialektiker und Stoiker: zur Logik der Stoa und ihrer Vorläufer* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1993): pp. 47–61.
- 79 Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 19.31–34. Cf. Ammonius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarius* 8.20–9.16 and Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 9.8–10.20.
- 80 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.1.1–2.5; Plotinus *Enneades* 5.8.5; Porphyry, *Vita Pythagorae* 11.9–12.4.
- 81 Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 18.23–27.
- 82 Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.2.9–15.
- 83 Olympiodorus, *Prolegomena* 18.25–19.36.
- 84 See Gerson, L. P., ‘Platonism and the Invention of the Problem of Universals’ in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* Vol. 86, No. 3: pp. 233–256 *contra* Landesman (1971), Quine (1961), and Wolterstorff (1970).
- 85 Aristotle, *Metaphysica* 1003a11.
- 86 Proclus, *Institutio theologica* 23–24.
- 87 Proclus, *Institutio theologica* 67.1–14. Cf. Simplicius, *In Aristotelis categorias commentarium* 8.82.35–83.10; Asclepius, *In Aristotelis metaphysicorum libros A-Z commentaria* 433.9–436.6; Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 90.30–91.18; Ammonius, *In Porphyrii isagogen* *In Porphyrii isagogen sive quinque voces* 41.1–42.26; 68.25–69.2.
- 88 Dodds, E. R., *Proclus. The Elements of Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963 [2nd edn]): p. 65.
- 89 Aristotle, *Metaphysica* 990b27–34.
- 90 Cf. Plotinus at Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 10.35–36: *ἐκείνους δεῖ πρὸς ἐμὲ ἔρχεσθαι, οὐκ ἐμὲ πρὸς ἐκείνους* and Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 1.12.35–39: *ἀλλὰ κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἀληθὲς ὥς βούλεται ἀναδιδάσκειν, τὴν γνώμην τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιτηδεῖαν ἀπεργαζόμεναι πρὸς τὸ μετέχειν τῶν θεῶν, καὶ ἀνάγουσαι αὐτὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ διὰ πειθοῦς ἐμμελοῦς συναρμόζουσαι.*
- 91 See Proclus, *In Platonis Parmenidem* 982.19–30; 1003.6–29; Syrianus, *In Aristotelis metaphysica commentaria* 3.30–33; Elias, *In Porphyrii isagogen* 37.9–11; Damascius, *In Philebum* 54.1; Simplicius, *In Aristotelis libros de anima commentaria* [Sp. ?] (fort. auctore Prisciano Lydo) 11.9.33–37; Ammonius, *In Porphyrii isagogen* *In Porphyrii isagogen sive quinque voces* 34–24–25; David, *In Porphyrii isagogen commentarium* 88.8–9; Joannes Philoponus, *In Aristotelis analytica priora commentaria* 13.2.307.5–8. An earlier formulation of the same point can be found in Alcinoüs, *Epitome doctrinae Platonicae sive Διδασκαλικός* 5.
- 92 Proclus, *In Platonis Parmenidem* 649.25–26.
- 93 Elias, *In Porphyrii isagogen* 37.17.23.

- 94 Proclus, *In primum Euclidis elementorum librum commentarii* 57.23; 211.20–21.
- 95 Proclus, *In Platonis Parmenidem* 1003.6–29.
- 96 Proclus, *Institutio theologica* 36.2.
- 97 Olympiodorus, *In Platonis Alcibiadem commentarii* 110.13–111.2.
- 98 Proclus, *Institutio theologica* 26.1–2: Πᾶν τὸ παρακτικὸν αἴτιον ἄλλων μένον αὐτὸ ἐφ' ἐαυτοῦ παράγει τὰ μετ' αὐτὸ καὶ τὰ ἐφεξῆς.
- 99 Plotinus, *Enneades* 6.1–3 = Tractates 39.1–3/42–4: Περὶ τῶν γενῶν τοῦ ὄντος πρῶτον· οὗ ἡ ἀρχή· περὶ τῶν ὄντων πόσα, καὶ τίνα; Περὶ τῶν γενῶν τοῦ ὄντος δεύτερον· οὗ ἡ ἀρχή· ἐπειδὴ περὶ τῶν λεγομένων δέκα γενῶν ἐπέσκεπται; Περὶ τῶν γενῶν τοῦ ὄντος τρίτον· οὗ ἡ ἀρχή· περὶ μὲν τῆς οὐσίας ὅπῃ δοκεῖ. See Strange, S. K., 'Plotinus, Porphyry, and the Neoplatonic Interpretation of the "Categories"' in Haase, W., (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt (ANRW)*, Band II, 36.2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987): pp. 955–974.
- 100 Porphyry, *In Aristotelis categorias expositio per interrogationem et responsionem* 4.1.91.1–5.
- 101 Plotinus, *Enneades* 6.5.3.30–31 = Tractate 22.2/23: Περὶ τοῦ τὸ ὄν ἐν καὶ ταὐτὸ ὄν ἅμα πανταχοῦ εἶναι ὅλον δεύτερον· οὗ ἡ ἀρχή· τὸ ἐν καὶ ταὐτὸν ἀριθμῶι πανταχοῦ ἅμα ὅλον εἶναι.
- 102 Plotinus, *Enneades* 5.8 = Tractate 28/31: Περὶ τοῦ νοητοῦ κάλλους· οὗ ἡ ἀρχή· ἐπειδὴ φαμεν τὸν ἐν θεᾷ τοῦ νοητοῦ – a commentary on Plato, *Phaedrus* 246d–247e.
- 103 Cf. Nag'–Hammâdi codices I, 3, ΠΕΓΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΝΤΜΗΕ = *The Gospel of Truth* = *Evangelium veritatis* 22.38–23.18 and Motte, L., 'L'hiéroglyphe, d'Esna à l'Évangile de Vérité' in *Deuxième Journée d'Études Coptes, Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte* 3 (Louvain, Paris: Peeters, 1984).
- 104 Plotinus, *Enneades* 5.8.6.1–19.
- 105 Plotinus, *Enneades* 5.8.5.
- 106 Wallis, R. T., 'Nous as Experience' in Harris, R. B., (ed.), *The Significance of Neoplatonism* (Albany: New York, 1976): pp. 121–154.
- 107 Νοῦς must know the essence (τὸ τί) of its objects rather than merely its quality (τὸ ποῖόν τι). This is possible because 'real truth consists in agreement not with another but with itself, and it says nothing else beside itself, and is what it says and says what it is' (ἡ ὄντως ἀλήθεια οὐ συμφωνοῦσα ἄλλῳ ἀλλ' ἐαυτῇ, καὶ οὐδὲν παρ' αὐτήν, ἄλλο λέγει, <ἀλλ' ὃ λέγει>, καὶ ἔστι, καὶ ὃ ἔστι, τοῦτο καὶ λέγει). See Plotinus, *Enneades* 5.5.2.18–20. Cf. Wallis, R. T., 'Nous as Experience' in Harris, R. B., (ed.), *The Significance of Neoplatonism* (Albany: New York, 1976). See also Rappe, S., *Reading Neoplatonism: Nondiscursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Damascius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- 108 Wallis, R. T., 'Scepticism and Neoplatonism' in Haase, W., (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt (ANRW)*, Band II, 36.2 (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1987): pp. 911–954.
- 109 Rappe, S., *Reading Neoplatonism: Nondiscursive Thinking in the Texts of Plotinus, Porphyry, and Damascius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- 110 Gerson, L. P., 'What Is Platonism?' in *id.*, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (Ithaca, London: Cornell, 2005): pp. 24–46; Lloyd, A. C., *The Anatomy of Neoplatonism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).
- 111 See Ammonius, *In Aristotelis librum de interpretatione commentarius* 24.24–9.
- 112 This could be true unless, for example, we are to take seriously the etymological procedures of the *Cratylus*.
- 113 An εἰκὼς μῦθος: Plato, *Timaeus* 29d2.
- 114 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.2.1–7.
- 115 Clarke, Dillon, and Hershbelle (2003): p. 291.
- 116 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.2.
- 117 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 5.19.18–22.
- 118 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 5.19.11–17.

- 119 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 5.19.22–28.
- 120 Clarke, Dillon, and Hershbelle (2003): p. 260–261.
- 121 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 6.6.2. On ‘Egyptian’ theurgic uses of intermediate *συνθήματα* in Iamblichus see Shaw, G., *Theurgy and the Soul: The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995): pp. 170–178.
- 122 Proclus, *Institutio theologica* 123.5–11.
- 123 Dodds (1963): pp. 110–111.
- 124 For an example of the converse procedure whereby higher entities think on successively lower ontological levels, cf. Numenius, *Fragmenta* 22 = Proclus, *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* 1.303.27–32: *Νουμήνιος δὲ τὸν μὲν πρῶτον κατὰ τὸ ‘ὅ ἐστι ζῶον’ τάττει καὶ φησιν ἐν προσχρήσει τοῦ δευτέρου νοεῖν, τὸν δὲ δεύτερον κατὰ τὸν νοῦν καὶ τοῦτον αὖ ἐν προσχρήσει τοῦ τρίτου δημιουργεῖν, τὸν δὲ τρίτον κατὰ τὸν διανοούμενον.*
- 125 Damascius, *In Phaedonem* (versio 1) 172.1–3.
- 126 Porphyry, *De abstinentia* 2.34.3–10.
- 127 Porphyry, *De abstinentia* 2.34.14–16.
- 128 Porphyry, *De abstinentia* 2.42.1–12.

5 The cosmos of the *Hieroglyphica*

The most interesting – because by the standards of the tradition the most sophisticated – use of hieroglyphs is the symbolic. At first glance, as with much else in Horapollo's treatise, the symbolic use appears to be a particularly rare phenomenon. This appearance will turn out to be misleading, however, in view of the range of usage that falls within of the symbolic possibilities already considered. But before looking into the question of how this misleading appearance arises, it is important to recognize that if hieroglyphic signs are capable of achieving meaningfulness by symbolizing or allegorizing, it is essential, therefore, to present an account of the various possible rationales for an understanding of allegorical interpretation as a means to the exegesis of hieroglyphs.

To the extent that I have been successful in the following chapter, so much the better placed will this chapter be to address those issues arising from the Neoplatonists' method of hieroglyphic exegesis related to the plausibility of establishing Horapollo's hieroglyphics as a proper topic for metaphysical investigation whereby the intelligible causes of phenomena are accordingly presented symbolically or allegoristically. I am, above all, concerned to show that Horapollonian hieroglyphs plausibly serve as occasions to venture a methodologically principled essay consistent with both the late Platonist philosophy of meaning and its metaphysical presuppositions as characterized, for example, by Iamblichus' doctrine of 'intellective interpretation' (*νοερὰ θεωρία*) described earlier.¹

5.1 Horapollo's symbolic hieroglyphs

The *Hieroglyphica* employs several ways of identifying the activity of the sign-user through the use of the sign.² Not only might a given sign (*σημεῖον*) either show (*δηλοῖ*) or signify (*σημαίνει*) its meaning, then, but also, in using a particular glyph, the scribes may signify (*σημαίνουσι*) that meaning in a number of senses (*αἰνιττόμενοι, μηνύοντες, νομίζοντες*, etc.), which is suggestive not only of a variety of explanatory techniques, but also of formal and informal settings in which they may be applied.³ There are many points that Horapollo does not spell out. One is what precisely the distinctions between these senses are. Another is what the difference between a sign and a symbol is.

There is only a handful of occurrences of the word ‘symbol’ and its cognates in the text, all in Book One. There are additionally four references to allusion (*αἰνίσσομαι*) at 1.2, 1.44, 1.59, and 1.62 and one to *adumbrating* (*σκιάζω*) at 1.70 that might be thought to be relevant. On the whole, however, the most extensive passage for any attempt to explain what Horapollo might consider a symbolic relation is supported by the use of the term *συμβολικῶς* at 1.19 of the case of the lion, which, when asleep, keeps his eyes open.

[Πῶς ἐγρηγορότα γράφουσιν]. Ἐγρηγορότα δὲ γράφοντες ἢ καὶ φύλακα, λέοντος γράφουσι κεφαλὴν, ἐπειδὴ ὁ λέων ἐν τῷ ἐγρηγορεῖναι μέμνε τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, κοιμώμενος δὲ ἀνεωγότας τούτους ἔχει, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τοῦ φυλάσσειν σημεῖον. διόπερ καὶ συμβολικῶς τοῖς κλείθροις τῶν ἱερῶν λέοντας ὡς φύλακας παρειλήφασιν.⁴

[How they write a watchful person.] To write a watchful person, or even a guard, they *depict* the head of a lion, because the lion, when awake, closes his eyes, but when asleep keeps them open, which is a sign of watchfulness. For this reason at the gates of the temples they have symbolically appropriated lions as guardians.

In other words, because a lion sleeps with open eyes, which is a *natural sign* of watchfulness, a depiction of a lion is a *hieroglyphic sign* of watchfulness. But the setting of lions as guards is – it is worth repeating – in the text explicitly *symbolic*. I take it that it is uncontroversial to point out that there would be a difference between a sacred enclosure whose entrance is guarded by a lion and a sacred enclosure at the entrance of which is a sign of a lion, such that only the latter could reasonably be described as symbolic in any sense. So, what exactly is the relationship between a sign and that which it depicts, that which it signifies, and anything that it might symbolize?

A lion that sleeps with open eyes might be a sign of vigilance in two senses: (i) in the sense that it is itself an *instance* of vigilance by virtue of such a lion exercising or demonstrating vigilance; or (ii) in the sense that it is *indicative* of vigilance by virtue of referring to it – which a sign depicting the same lion could do equally well. The temptation is to emphasize the vigilance exercised by an actual lion, and the impassiveness of a lion-sign. In that way, in the case of an actual lion being set as a guard, sleeping with open eyes is a *natural* sign that the lion is in fact vigilant, and in the case of a lion-sign, open-eyed sleep is a *linguistic* sign signifying vigilance. The one explains the other: the Horapollonian lion (a *depiction* of a lion sleeping with open eyes) is a sign of vigilance only because actual lions sleep with open eyes (and so are vigilant). The question is, however, under what circumstances might one describe the carved image or sign of a lion as a symbol? The answer seems to be that if sleeping with open eyes is a sign of vigilance (*τοῦ φυλάσσειν σημεῖον*) exhibited by lions, then to set hieroglyphic images or signs of lions as guards is symbolic, since it is used in those contexts in which that which the sign depicts functions under ordinary (i.e. non-symbolic) conditions.

In the *Hieroglyphica* this symbolic use is therefore distinct from both the purely pictographic and the variously significative uses, conceptual and figurative, to which glyphs might otherwise be put. Not only is the meaning not the same as what is depicted – i.e. the meaning of a sign is not that to which the sign refers (if it were, the meaning of hieroglyph at 1.19 would be *lion sleeping with open eyes*, not *on guard*) – but what is symbolized by the fact that the Egyptians ‘employed lions as guards’ (λέοντας ὡς φύλακας παρειλήφασιν) is also distinct from what a lion-sign signifies because it is neither the referent of the sign, nor what the sign signifies that is symbolic (though it is in fact significative), but the particular employment or application (παράληψις) of lions as guards (i.e. symbolically by means of lion-signs).

Whether lions or not do sleep with open eyes does not affect the specifically significative relation between the hieroglyph and its meaning (i.e. vigilance), nor its symbolic use, only the choice of glyph to bear that significance. It signifies and symbolizes what it does because the emphasis in the causal clause explaining the meaning of the glyph is equally distributed between the fact that it is a *lion* sleeping with open eyes and the fact that it is a lion *sleeping with open eyes*. So, on the one hand, lions were at one time said to sleep with open eyes. On the other hand, between sleeping with open eyes and vigilance there is a connection internal to the two, one that does not depend on an external condition explanatory of the relation between them. For these reasons, a lion – or an image or sign of a lion – was used to mean vigilance. This does not mean someone or something sleeping with open eyes must in fact be vigilant (they are in fact asleep). The *image* of someone (something) sleeping with open eyes might nonetheless be *significative* of vigilance because the *phenomenon* is itself *indicative* of vigilance. Because (whether factually or conventionally) lions sleep with open eyes, the image of a lion can (grammatically, logically) be used to mean or signify vigilance. But that is insufficient to explain why, given lions are in fact or by convention vigilant, either the pictographic or the figurative use is symbolic. Neither to depict nor to signify vigilance is of itself an instance of vigilance, symbolic or otherwise. If Egyptians set not lions (the beasts), but figures or signs of lions as guards to sacred enclosures, then the fact that this is symbolic is evident, even if what makes it symbolic is not so clear.

Though the natural history of the lion in 1.19 might be considered somewhat misleading to a reader unacquainted with Plutarch or Aelian,⁵ still the connection between *sleeping with open eyes* and *vigilance* is clear. That the former is aligned with the latter is the reason why a guard might wear the badge of a lion in order to signify his profession. To post the badge as guard, however, presupposes a further relation whereby the use of the hieroglyphic badge can be understood as symbolic in a distinct sense. In fact, I have already suggested a possible way to explain such a further symbolic relation. In this and related cases the depictive sign is symbolic depending on a secondary deployment, which is dependent on those uses in which it purely depicts its referent (in the manner of a pictogram), or signifies an internal conceptual or formal and figurative relation (in accordance with natural signs of the phenomenon so signified). The

sign of a lion both shows a lion, and figuratively means vigilance by virtue of the shared attribute of open-eyed sleep, but it also symbolizes the vigilance of the lion it depicts by its placement in front of a sacred enclosure. In other words, this is a case in which the horizontal relations (through which pictographic signs establish ostensive links, and natural signs license conceptual or inferential links between signs and meanings) are supplemented by the vertical relation of reintroduction into an extra-significative, extra-naturalistic frame of reference.

What then is it exactly that constitutes that extra-significative, extra-naturalistic frame of reference? The answer, I think, is this: the fact that the lion-glyph can *signify* vigilance in this way is the basis for its use as an *admonition regarding vigilance*. In other words, the glyph is capable of fulfilling an admonitory function that neither a sleeping lion, nor a sign signifying vigilance fulfils, but only because that glyph does *show* a sleeping lion and for that reason can also *signify* vigilance. A symbolic glyph does not nominally identify a lion sleeping with open eyes or predicatively signify vigilance in discursive composition, but in good Plotinian form non-discursively presents both in an admonition *as a unified whole*.

Do we have any other clear examples of hieroglyphs operating as a non-discursive unified whole? There are, besides the use of the word *συμβολικῶς* at 1.19, three occurrences of the word *σύμβολον* in the text: 1.10, 1.17, 1.34. The second of these three, at 1.17, the *σύμβολον* of the lion to the god Horus is shown or indicated (*δεικνύντες*) by the placing of lions beneath his throne. This, no doubt, prefigures and is a close analogy for the symbolic use of lions at 1.19, but here what is explained is that it is a *symbol* by virtue of the placing of (images of) the animals beneath the thrones, and not the *placement* that is explained by virtue of the symbolism. The first (1.10) and the third (1.34) occurrences shed light on a more inclusive sense in which Horapollon uses the term ‘symbol’. This is not because he gives an explicit statement on the matter, but precisely because the examples he gives do *not* match the kind of use exemplified by the symbolic vigilance of hieroglyphic lions. Instead they match other uses with which we are already familiar from the figurative and allusive modes of hieroglyphic expression.

In the first case (1.10) the scarab is a *σύμβολον* of the sun by virtue of being ‘in the form of a cat and spiny’ (*αἰλουρόμορφος καὶ ἀκτινωτή*). This is plainly a reference to a similarity in appearance, perhaps that of an alarmed cat with fur standing in a ridge along its spine, or a ‘rayed shellfish’ (*ἀκτινοφόρος*). The important point, however, is that it is a formal similarity between the (depicted) scarab and the sun is characteristic of the figurative or tropic, rather than allusive or allegorical use of hieroglyphs – by affinity (*κατ’ οἰκειότητα*) as described by Clement signifying shared formal attribute – that licenses the signification of one by the other.

In the third case (1.34), that the phoenix is a *σύμβολον* of the sun is cited in explanation of a hieroglyph depicting a phoenix signifying an inundation (for the sun, like an inundation, ‘surmounts and surveys all’). Here we have neither the symbolic substitution of the sign for the item depicted (as in the case of the

vigilant lion), nor signification by formal affinity (as in the case of the scarab), but allusion vertically dependent on, but not horizontally related by a shared predicable attribute.

Nonetheless, in each of these cases the glyphs are symbolic by virtue of fulfilling meaningful expressive functions, individually and non-discursively. So, for example, the glyph of a bat with teeth (2.53) figuratively and non-discursively presents a woman nurturing a child, but its specifically symbolic function is neither depictive, nor significative. Its symbolic function is constituted by its role in the catalogue of virtues and vices, namely as an ethical *injunction of maternal solicitude*. Also, the scarab glyph (1.10) unifiedly and non-discursively alludes to the generation of the cosmos (*γένεσιν κόσμου*) and thereby exercises the symbolic function of a *disclosure of cosmic truth*. What we have, therefore, is use of the term ‘symbol’ in the *Hieroglyphica* to refer to each of the hieroglyphic uses identified in Clement as symbolic by mimesis, tropically symbolic, and allegorical by allusion, and by Porphyry as both hieroglyphic and symbolic (whether that covers pictographic and allusive uses only, or includes figurative use too). This is not to imply that Horapollo inherits the term specifically from one rather than the other, but that if we bear in mind Clement’s fuller classification of the script-types, we may be better placed to identify corresponding metaphysical distinctions than if we restrict the investigation to Porphyry’s parallel divisions.

5.2 Horapollo’s metaphysics

As I have argued in the previous section, there is a third, symbolic sense in which Horapollo provides exegeses of hieroglyphs neither as mimetic (i.e. in their pictographic capacity as depictions of natural phenomena), nor as legitimizing conceptual or inferential links. However, the question remains to what extent the *Hieroglyphica* exhibits any of the features of the Neoplatonic interpretative methodology as described. But there is, I think, an altogether legitimate sense of resistance to the very idea that anything obviously metaphysical is at stake in the *Hieroglyphica* at all. Part of the problem arises, I believe, from something more akin to a disparity of register than anything amounting to an objective impropriety inherent in applying the category to what is after all almost entirely without explicit theoretical content. If metaphysics is ultimately a theoretical endeavour, speculative, abstract or *a priori*, then perhaps it is as well to concede without qualification that Horapollo is not a metaphysician. It is not unusual, however, to find ample precedent for using the term in a far less exclusive sense, not least if metaphysics is tied more specifically to the subject-matter than the manner of addressing it. In that sense we might find that the topical interests of the two books are considerably more suggestive and a good deal better fit for the preoccupations of its early modern, especially 16th and 17th century audiences. In this perspective metaphysics should better be conceived of as a sophisticated scheme of imagery for the expression of learning and complexity of thought, particularly concerning the transmundane.

One way to establish the viability of employing this inclusive conception of metaphysics consistent with maintaining a more explicitly theorized backdrop against which the text may be profitably read is to outline characteristic thematic groupings of the signs and the meanings they express. Naturally the *signs* should not themselves be expected to be transmundane precisely because they are depictions of mundane phenomena with a certain kind of cultural and historical provenance. It seems helpful for this purpose to use the standard arrangements of such artefacts as established in Gardiner's sign-lists as follows.

Mammals (51 signs)

Book One: 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 26, 39, 40, 46, 48, 49, 50

Book Two: 20, 22 (x2), 33, 36, 37, 38, 42, 43 (x2), 44, 45, 50, 52, 53, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 91, 100

Parts of mammals (19 signs)

Book One: 15, 18, 19, 20, 23, 46, 47, 56

Book Two: 17, 18, 21, 53, 64, 70, 72, 73, 78, 84, 88

Birds (40 signs)

Book One: 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 (x2), 34, 35, 36, 53, 54, 55, 57

Book Two: 2, 15, 25, 31, 32, 39, 40, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 56, 57, 58, 89, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 115

Parts of birds (6 signs)

Book Two: 10, 15, 48, 81, 96, 118

Fishes and parts of fishes (13 signs)

Book One: 44

Book Two: 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114

Amphibious animals, reptiles, etc. (24 signs)

Book One: 1, 2, 25, 45, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 70

Book Two: 24, 35, 59, 60, 61, 62, 80, 81, 87, 101, 102

Invertebrata and lesser animals (12 signs)

Book One: 10, 12 (x2), 51, 52, 62

Book Two: 24, 35, 41, 47, 55, 64

Parts of the human body (15 signs)

Book One: 22, 24, 27, 31, 65

Book Two: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 13, 23, 29, 119

Man and his occupations (9 signs)

Book One: 23, 41, 42, 58

Book Two: 4, 5, 11, 12, 91

Gods and goddesses (2 signs)

Book One: 3

Book Two: 15

Trees and plants (8 signs)

Book One: 4

Book Two: 8, 27, 34, 46, 77, 79, 93

Sky, earth, fire, and water (17 signs)

Book One: 1, 5, 13, 21, 29, 37, 43, 58, 59, 65, 66

Book Two: 1, 14, 15, 16, 74, 115

Writing, music, strokes, measures, geometrical figures, etc. (14 signs)

Book One: 28, 30, 32, 33, 38, 42, 59

Book Two: 27 (x2), 29, 30, 91, 116, 117

Buildings, equipment, domestic and temple furniture (11 signs)

Book One: 21, 22, 38, 61

Book Two: 5, 12, 19, 26, 28, 75, 112

Crowns, dress etc. (2 signs)

Book One: 15, 40

The distribution of meanings across the signs listed is both the decisive concern for any metaphysical focus we might wish to highlight in the *Hieroglyphica*, and the more difficult to classify. This is due not only to the homogeneity of the explanations provided (especially in Book Two), but presumably also to the fact that the meanings of glyphs are precisely not constrained by the finite range of items they depict. Nonetheless, the meanings assigned by Horapollo to the glyphs listed above can be broadly grouped as follows.⁶

People, their relations and professions (109 meanings)

Book One: 10 (x3), 11, 14, 23, 25, 38, 39 (x4), 40, 41, 42, 53, 59, 60, 62, 63, 65, 67 (x3)

Book Two: 12, 14, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 (x2), 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 (x2), 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 93, 94, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119

People, their qualities, parts, and activities (73 meanings)

Book One: 6 (x4), 7, 9, 10, 11 (x3), 14, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 39 (x5), 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54 (x3), 55, 56, 57

Book Two: 1, 2 (x2), 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 (x2), 10, 11, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 31, 34, 38, 58, 92, 95

Deities, fate (15 meanings)

Book One: 3, 6 (x3), 8, 11 (x2), 12 (x2), 13, 61, 64

Book Two: 1, 29 (x2)

Celestial, geographical, and natural phenomena (17 meanings)

Book One: 2, 10, 11, 13, 14 (x2), 15, 16, 21, 22, 34, 68, 69, 70

Book Two: 3, 15, 16

Measurement, quantity, and duration (23 meanings)

Book One: 1, 3, 4, 5, 11 (x3), 13, 38, 58 (x2), 66

Book Two: 1 (x3), 2, 13, 20, 21, 27, 29, 30, 57

Learning, and the parts of language (4 meanings)

Book One: 14, 27, 37, 38

Equipment, tools (2 meanings)

Book One: 24, 38

Fauna (2 meanings)

Book Two: 44, 47

These rather inclusively construed groupings make at least one thing clear: the vast majority of meanings given for the glyph-sequence concern *People*,

their professions and qualities and what I have called *Qualities, parts, and occupations*. These, I suggest, particularly the former as a feature of Book Two, might best be understood as a function of the peculiarly ‘humane’ interests of Philip, Horapollo’s editor and continuator. There is, however, also a non-negligible interest in Book One in *Deities and Cosmic, celestial, or natural phenomena*.

So, for instance:

[Πῶς κόσμον]. Κόσμον βουλόμενοι γράψαι, ὅφιν ζωγραφοῦσι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐσθίοντα οὐράν, ἐστιγμένον φολίσι ποικίλαις, διὰ μὲν τῶν φολίδων αἰνιπτόμενοι τοὺς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἀστέρας. βαρύτατον δὲ τὸ ζῶον καθάπερ καὶ ἡ γῆ, λειότατον δὲ ὥσπερ ὕδωρ· καθ’ ἕκαστον δὲ ἐνιαυτὸν τὸ γῆρας ἀφείς, ἀποδύεται, καθ’ ὃ καὶ ὁ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐνιαύσιος χρόνος, ἐναλλαγὴν ποιούμενος, νεάζει· τῷ δὲ ὡς τροφῇ χρῆσθαι τῷ ἑαυτοῦ σώματι σημαίνει τὸ πάντα ὅσα ἐκ τῆς θείας προνοίας ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ γεννᾶται, ταῦτα πάλιν καὶ τὴν μείωσιν εἰς αὐτὰ λαμβάνειν.⁷

[How the universe]. When they want to write the universe, they depict a serpent speckled with variegated scales, eating its own tail, by the scales alluding to the stars in the universe. The animal is also very heavy, as is the earth, and very slippery, like water; and every year it sloughs and loses old age, as in the universe the period of a year causes a change, and is renewed. And using its own body for food signifies that all things such as are generated by divine providence in the universe, these undergo a diminution into the same things again.

The figure of the serpent alludes (*αἰνιπτόμενοι*) to two qualities (heaviness, smoothness) of elements of the cosmos; the variegated scales allude to the stars in the cosmos; the serpent of which this is a figure alludes – through the natural fact of shedding skin in rejuvenation and devouring its own tail – either to the principle of the cyclical temporality of the cosmos, or to the reciprocal nature of growth and decay within the cosmos.

More important, perhaps, is the fact that hieroglyphic exegeses from sources less controversially aligned with Neoplatonic interests and commitments are occasionally identical in detail. We have, for example, several examples of hieroglyphic exegesis in Photius’ report of Damascius.⁸

ὁ ἵπποπόταμος ἄδικον ζῶον, ὅθεν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἱερογλυφικοῖς γράμμασιν ἀδικίαν δηλοῖ· τὸν γὰρ πατέρα ἀποκτείνας βιάζεται τὴν μητέρα.⁹

The hippopotamus is an unjust animal, hence in hieroglyphic script it indicates injustice, for it kills its father and then does violence to its mother. τὰς δώδεκα ὥρας ἡ αἴλουρος διακρίνει, νύκτας καὶ ἡμέρας οὐροῦσα καθ’ ἑκάστην αἰεί, δίκην ὀργάνου τινὸς ὠρογνωμονοῦσα.¹⁰

The cat marks the twelve hours by urinating day and night in each one non-stop, telling the time like a mechanical clock.

ὁ ὄρυξ τὸ ζῶον πταρνύμενος ἀνατέλλειν διασημαίνει τὴν Σῶθιν.¹¹

When the animal the oryx sneezes it thereby signifies the rising of Sirius.

Each of these three explanations of the meanings of hieroglyphic characters have parallels or variants in Horapollo.

[Πῶς ἄδικον καὶ ἀχάριστον]. Ἄδικον δὲ καὶ ἀχάριστον, ἵπποποτάμου ὄνυχας δύο κάτω βλέποντας γράφουσιν. οὗτος γάρ, ἐν ἡλικίᾳ γενόμενος, πειράζει τὸν πατέρα, πότερόν ποτε ἰσχύει μαχόμενος πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ ἐὰν μὲν ὁ πατήρ ἐκχωρήσῃ, τόπον αὐτῷ μερίσας, οὗτος πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα ἐπὶ γάμον ἤκει, καὶ ἐᾷ τοῦτον ζῆν· εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐπιτρέψειεν αὐτῷ ποιήσασθαι πρὸς τὴν μητέρα γάμον, ἀναιρεῖ αὐτόν, ἀνδρειότερος καὶ ἀκμαιότερος ὑπάρχων.¹²

[How an unjust and ungrateful man]. (To signify) an unjust and ungrateful man, they depict two claws of an hippopotamus facing down. For when this animal has arrived at its prime it contests its father by fighting, to try whether by fighting it can ever prevail, and should the father give it ground he cedes him terrain and consorts with its own mother, and allows him to live; but if his father should not permit the union with his mother, he destroys him, being the stronger and more vigorous.

φασὶ γὰρ τὸν ἄρρενα αἴλουρον συµμεταβάλλειν τὰς κόρας τοῖς τοῦ ἡλίου δρόμοις.¹³

For they say that the male cat alters its pupils according to the course of the sun.

Ἀκαθαρσίαν δὲ γράφοντες, ὄρυγα ζωγραφοῦσιν, ἐπειδὴ ἐπ' ἀνατολὴν ἐρχομένης τῆς σελήνης, ἀτενίζων εἰς τὴν θεόν, κραυγὴν ποιεῖται, . . . τὰ δ' αὐτὰ ποιεῖ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡλίου θείου ἄστρου ἀνατολῆς.¹⁴

[How they show impurity]. To write impurity, they depict an oryx, because when the moon rises, this animal looks intently towards the goddess and cries out, . . . And it does the same things at the rising of the divine star the sun.

The suggestive introduction in Photius, immediately after a sequence of examples from which the earlier text is excerpted, of the figure of Heraiscus, Horapollo's uncle, is unlikely to be a direct line of transmission of material from shared sources. The differences in details between the three parallel examples, as well as earlier parallels to the first in Plutarch,¹⁵ makes the plausible explanation a generic interest in Alexandrian philosophical circles in precisely the Egyptizing philosophical subjects alluded to by Damascius.

For that reason, the question of whether there are background Hellenized metaphysical presuppositions that the *Hieroglyphica* might reflect is not implausible. For example, concerning the two rival conceptions of the ungenerated world which are explicitly at stake, in the absence of revelation (so the objection goes in the Christian critique), what means can there be by which the ungenerated world that is such an important part of Platonic as well as Christian metaphysics may be known? It was noted previously that this is an issue of direct relevance in, if not influence on, the *Hieroglyphica*'s frequent and prominent interest in the matter of generation, but I shall argue that the stated objection

is addressed by the *Hieroglyphica* – at least indirectly – insofar as Horapollo provides us with a number of examples of hieroglyphs whose exegesis invoke instances of immutability, eternity, self-sufficiency, and unity.

The clearest examples are those hieroglyphs whose meanings include Egyptian or Graeco-Roman deities: Isis, Ares, Aphrodite, Athene, and Hephaistus.¹⁶ There are also several culturally neutral glyphs with meanings involving immutability or eternity: a god, something sublime, the soul, foreknowledge, the cosmic god, a cosmic ruler, a king ruling part of the cosmos, the almighty, a man's soul, and the infinite.¹⁷ Whereas most of the examples of glyphs with meanings related to the divine occur in Book One, we have seen in the previous section that Book Two includes a long catalogue of virtues and vices: temperance, the permanent and steadfast, impiety, an initiate.¹⁸ In each case, of course, the phenomenon the glyph depicts is a natural phenomenon, occurring within the generated, sensible world.

[Πῶς αἰῶνα σημαίνουσιν]. Αἰῶνα σημαίνοντες, ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην γράφουσι, διὰ τὸ αἰώνια εἶναι στοιχεῖα. Αἰῶνα δ' ἑτέρως γράψαι βουλόμενοι, ὄφιν ζωγραφοῦσιν, ἔχοντα τὴν οὐρὰν ὑπὸ τὸ λοιπὸν σῶμα κρυπτομένην, ὃν καλοῦσιν Αἰγύπτιοι οὐραῖον, ὃ ἐστὶν ἐλληνιστὶ βασιλίσκον, ὃν περ χρυσοῦν ποιοῦντες, θεοῖς περιτιθέασιν. αἰῶνα δὲ λέγουσιν Αἰγύπτιοι διὰ τοῦδε τοῦ ζώου δηλοῦσθαι, ἐπειδὴ τριῶν γενῶν ὄφεων καθεστώτων, τὰ μὲν λοιπὰ θνητὰ ὑπάρχει, τοῦτο δὲ μόνον ἀθάνατον, ὃ καὶ προσφυσῆσαν ἑτέρῳ παντὶ ζῳῷ, δίχα καὶ τοῦ δακεῖν, ἀναιρεῖ· ὅθεν, ἐπειδὴ δοκεῖ ζωῆς καὶ θανάτου κυριεύειν, διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς τῶν θεῶν ἐπιτιθέασιν.¹⁹

[How they signify eternity]. To signify eternity they draw the sun and moon, on account of being eternal elements. But when they want to write eternity differently, they depict a serpent with its tail hidden by the rest of its body, which the Egyptians call 'ouraios', which is in Greek basilisk, which they make in gold and place on the gods. The Egyptians say that eternity is shown by means of this animal because of the three existing species of serpents, the others are mortal, but this alone is immortal, and because it destroys just by breathing on every other animal without even biting. Since it appears to have power over life and death, on account of this they place it upon the head of the gods.

The claim that the elements (the sun and the moon), or certain species of serpent, are eternal is necessarily problematic for Christianity as belonging to the generated – and therefore temporally finite – world. Nothing within the cosmos, including celestial bodies, is eternal.²⁰ Indeed, all Platonists (Christian or otherwise) would consider everything within the cosmos 'part of the generated world', even if they thought that it was everlasting. It seems, however, that Horapollo's understanding is to agree that the universe is both 'part of the generated world' and eternal, though in a qualified sense.

As we saw earlier at 1.2, 'the stars in the universe' (τοὺς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἀστέρας) belong among things 'generated by divine providence in the world' (ἐκ τῆς θείας

προνοίας ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ γεννᾶται), and as such they are also subject to change and corruption, but in a cycle of continuous regeneration. This, however, does not preclude their identification of a particular divinity, Isis, with a star.

[Πῶς ἐνιαυτόν]. Ἐνιαυτὸν δὲ βουλόμενοι δηλῶσαι, Ἰσιν, τουτέστι γυναῖκα ζωγραφοῦσι, τῷ δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν θεὸν σημαίνουσιν. Ἰσις δὲ παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν ἀστήρ, αἰγυπτιστὶ καλούμενος Σῶθις, ἑλληνιστὶ δὲ Ἀστροκύων, ὃς καὶ δοκεῖ βασιλεύειν τῶν λοιπῶν ἀστέρων, ὅτε μὲν μείζων ὅτε δὲ ἥσσων ἀνατέλλων, καὶ ὅτε μὲν λαμπρότερος, ἔσθ' ὅτε δ' οὐχ οὕτως· ἔτι δὲ καί, διότι κατὰ τὴν τούτου τοῦ ἄστρου ἀνατολὴν σημειούμεθα περὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ μελλόντων τελεῖσθαι, διόπερ οὐκ ἀλόγως τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν Ἰσιν λέγουσι. καὶ ἑτέρως δὲ ἐνιαυτὸν γράφοντες, φοίνικα ζωγραφοῦσι, διὰ τὸ τὸ δένδρον τοῦτο μόνον τῶν ἄλλων κατὰ τὴν ἀνατολὴν τῆς σελήνης μίαν βάρυν γεννᾶν, ὥς ἐν ταῖς δώδεκα βάεσιν ἐνιαυτὸν ἀπαρτίζεσθαι.²¹

[How a year]. When they want to show a year, they depict Isis, i.e. a woman. By the same they also signify the goddess. Now among them Isis is a star, in Egyptian called Sothis, but in Greek Astrocuon, [the dog-star], which seems also to rule over the other stars, inasmuch as it sometimes rises more, and at other times less, and is sometimes brighter, and at other times not so; and moreover, because according to the rising of this star we signify all the events of the coming year, therefore not without reason do they call the year Isis. And writing the year otherwise, they depict a palm-frond, because of all others this tree alone at each rising of the moon produces one branch, so that in twelve branches the year is completed.

How does Horapollon resolve the difficulty of celestial bodies belonging to the generated world under divine providence while also being both eternal and divine themselves?

[Τί ἀστέρα γράφοντες δηλοῦσι]. Θεὸν δὲ ἐγκόσμιον σημαίνοντες, ἢ εἰμαρμένην, ἢ τὸν πέντε ἀριθμόν, ἀστέρα ζωγραφοῦσι. Θεὸν μὲν, ἐπειδὴ πρόνοια θεοῦ τὴν νίκην προστάσσει, ἢ τῶν ἀστέρων καὶ τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου κίνησις ἐκτελεῖται· δοκεῖ γὰρ αὐτοῖς δίχα θεοῦ μηδὲν ὅλως συνεστάναι· εἰμαρμένην δέ, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὕτη ἐξ ἀστρικῆς οἰκονομίας συνίσταται· τὸν δὲ πέντε ἀριθμόν, ἐπειδὴ πλήθους ὄντος ἐν οὐρανῷ, πέντε μόνοι ἐξ αὐτῶν κινούμενοι τὴν τοῦ κόσμου οἰκονομίαν ἐκτελοῦσι.²²

[What they show by drawing a star]. When they signify the encosmic god, or fate, or the number 5, they depict a star. And [by it they signify] god, because the providence of god prescribes the ascendancy by which the motion of the stars and the whole universe is achieved; for it appears to them that without a god nothing whatsoever could be regulated. And [by it they signify] fate, because even this is regulated by the arrangement of the stars; and also the number 5, because, though there are a multitude [of stars] in the sky, only five of them achieve the regulation of the world by their motion.

The answer appears to be – in line with standard Platonist doctrine – that he envisages the eternity and divinity at issue as *encosmic* (ἐγκόσμιον), but subject to supracosmic governance. In this it is not inconceivable that Proclus had some influence on Horapollo. Specifically, the expression ‘encosmic god’ (Θεὸν . . . ἐγκόσμιον) is likely evidence of just such influence. The term appears sparsely in Greek, occurring perhaps only two dozen times in a dozen authors²³ outside Proclus and Damascius and three times that often in Proclus alone.²⁴ Whether the term so used is specifically an innovation of Proclus or not, it is clearly characteristic of the 5th century Neoplatonism of Alexandria and Athens, though the family connection with Proclus through Heraiscus and Damascius through Horapollo himself would seem to be the most economical basis upon which to locate the source of influence.

One answer to the question of what kind of objects of interest are at play in the *Hieroglyphica* might be precisely those objects discernible through the application of the exegetical procedures concerned. The concern might still arise, however, that this is equally likely to be the case even if it were not uniformly Platonic objects at which we arrived. As a matter of fact, in one or two places what we do arrive at appears to support a Stoic interpretation.

[Πῶς παντοκράτορα]. Παντοκράτορα δὲ ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ζώου τελειώσεως σημαίνουσι, πάλιν τὸν ὀλόκληρον ὄφιν ζωγραφοῦντες· οὕτω παρ’ αὐτοῖς τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τὸ διηκόν ἐστι πνεῦμα.²⁵

[How the almighty]. They signify the almighty by completing the same animal, again depicting the entire serpent; thus amongst them it is the spirit that pervades the universe.

The ‘almighty’ (παντοκράτωρ) cannot be observed, or depicted, directly, so it is signified, namely by glyph depicting the ‘perfection’ (τελείωσις) of the ‘entire serpent’ (ὀλόκληρον ὄφιν). The expression ‘the spirit that pervades the universe’ (τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τὸ διηκόν ἐστι πνεῦμα) in particular might make one suppose a Stoic influence, since the Stoics talk about God in precisely these terms.²⁶ Similar material with apparent Stoic credentials appears elsewhere in Book One.²⁷ The problem with such a supposition, however, is that on its own it is insufficient for determining how the author used and understood terminology which is *prima facie* Stoic (in the case of τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τὸ διηκόν ἐστι πνεῦμα), or Platonist (in the case of Θεὸν . . . ἐγκόσμιον).

It is, however, the analytic process itself that demands a Platonist reading of the metaphysical status of the object. If Horapollo’s exegetical procedure in his explanations of the meaning of hieroglyphs is, as proposed, to infer from sensible phenomena to eternal realities, by analogy or allusion, to provide pre-eminent examples of metaphysical objects for contemplation,²⁸ then he is not motivated to cite either Egyptian lexicographical information, or observations on natural history, material artefacts, and cultural practices by an independent interest in recording those details for their own sake. The reason for their inclusion is, however, connected with the fact that they are both empirically

observable and historically original. Derivable from the sensible particulars, and therefore amenable to discursive reason, hieroglyphs are hierarchically intermediate items which lend themselves to analytic inferential procedures to conceptual and metaphysical content. Again in line with standard Platonist practice, then, the procedure involves the incorporation of originally Stoic material²⁹ not as a concession to Stoic interpretation in strictly physical terms in preference to Platonist alternatives, observing objective metaphysical determinants, but in order to allocate it both its proper place and its proper function in the Platonist ontology. On this reading, the proper place and function of the ‘encosmic god’ (*Θεὸν . . . ἐγκόσμιον*) is within the sensible realm. The ‘star’ hieroglyph signifies a reality that remains an explicitly *cosmic* entity.

If on this reading the encosmic realities signified by the hieroglyph of a star are then to be understood as *secondary* causes, then under the appropriate interpretation and in its application according to the guidance of a broader metaphysical objective, the ultimate objects of the explanatory exegesis ought to be understood as those *first* causes which are not cosmic entities at all, but supracosmic.³⁰

The relevant objective, which I described in Chapter 4, is that of the (post-Iamblichean) Neoplatonic conception of the nature of the relationship between the physical realm and the intelligible, according to which emanation from the Neoplatonic One does not decrease with proximity to the sensible realm, but extends as far as matter. As a consequence of matter itself being a product of emanation there is a sense in which the bridge between the divine, conceptual, and natural is provided for unattenuated, which helps to explain how entities in the physical world can be used to provoke thought about the latter. Within such a methodology the possibility of applying intellectual interpretations to the work of natural science is precisely entailed by the latter’s continuity with and complementarity to the conceptual and metaphysically causal realities on which they depend for their being.

The question here, however, is how we might know whether ‘the Pantocrator’ is in fact supracosmic and not itself encosmic. We can identify two points that allow for an understanding of ‘Pantocrator’ as a supracosmic entity. First, it is the serpent depicted by the hieroglyph that amongst the Egyptians is identified as ‘the spirit that pervades the universe’ (*παρ’ αὐτοῖς τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου τὸ διήκον ἐστι πνεῦμα*). The hieroglyph depicting the serpent, in contrast, signifies not the encosmic spirit the image of the complete serpent (*ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ζώου τελειώσεως*) depicts, but a third item, namely ‘the Pantocrator’. On its own, this still requires us to suppose that it is not only on the grounds of plausible historical context that Horapollo’s glyph, meaning, and object triad might plausibly be aligned with the Neoplatonic tripartite conception of expression (*λέξις*), thought (*νόημα*), and reality (*πρᾶγμα*). However, without the presupposition of such a division we have no explanation for either the exegetical procedure the exhibited in the *Hieroglyphica* quite generally, or for the specific exegetical example in which the distinction of an encosmic deity is offered. The second point concerns the distinction involved in using the term ‘encosmic’ itself. That

distinction, as per the sources from which it appears to be derived, is standardly used to highlight the familiar Platonic distinction between, on the one hand, the cosmic governance of the course of the ‘natural order of the cosmos’ (τὴν τοῦ κόσμου οἰκονομίαν) by the ‘encosmic god’ and, on the other, the supracosmic governance, here of ‘the Pantocrator’.

That Horapollon does in fact envisage an extra- or supracosmic principle is also attested in another of the early sections of Book One.

[Πῶς μονογενές]. Μονογενές δὲ δηλοῦντες, ἢ γένεσιν, ἢ πατέρα, ἢ κόσμον, ἢ ἄνδρα, κάνθαρον ζωγραφοῦσι. μονογενές μὲν ὅτι αὐτογενές ἐστὶ τὸ ζῷον, ὑπὸ θηλείας μὴ κυοφορούμενον. μόνη γὰρ γένεσις αὐτοῦ τοιαύτη ἐστίν· ἐπειδὴν ὁ ἄρσιν βούληται παιδοποιήσασθαι, βοὸς ἀφόδευμα λαβὼν, πλάσσει σφαιροειδὲς παραπλήσιον τῷ κόσμῳ σχῆμα, ὃ ἐκ τῶν ὀπισθίων μερῶν κυλίσας ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς εἰς δύσιν, αὐτὸς πρὸς ἀνατολὴν βλέπει, ἵνα ἀποδῶ τὸ τοῦ κόσμου σχῆμα· (αὐτὸς γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀπηλιώτου εἰς λίβα φέρεται, ὁ δὲ τῶν ἀστέρων δρόμος ἀπὸ λιβὸς εἰς ἀπηλιώτην). ταύτην οὖν τὴν σφαῖραν κατορύζας, εἰς γῆν κατατίθεται ἐπὶ ἡμέρας εἰκοσιοκτῶ, ἐν ὅσαις καὶ ἡ σελήνη ἡμέραις τὰ δώδεκα ζῳδια κυκλεύει, ὑφ’ ἣν ἀπομένον, ζωογονεῖται τὸ τῶν κανθάρων γένος· τῇ ἐνάτῃ δὲ καὶ εἰκοστῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἀνοίξας τὴν σφαῖραν, εἰς ὕδωρ βάλλει, (ταύτην γὰρ τὴν ἡμέραν νομίζει σύννοδον εἶναι σελήνης καὶ ἡλίου, ἔτι τε καὶ γένεσιν κόσμου), ἥς ἀνοιγομένης ἐν τῷ ὕδατι, ζῷα ἐξέρχεται, τουτέστιν οἱ κάνθαροι. γένεσιν δὲ διὰ τὴν προειρημένην αἰτίαν· πατέρα δέ, ὅτι ἐκ μόνου πατρὸς τὴν γένεσιν ἔχει ὁ κάνθαρος· κόσμον δέ, ἐπειδὴ κοσμοειδῆ τὴν γένεσιν ποιεῖται· ἄνδρα δέ, ἐπειδὴ θηλυκὸν γένος αὐτοῖς οὐ γίνεται.³¹

[How sole-begotten]. To show sole-begotten, or generation, or a father, or the world, or a man, they depict a scarab. And [they signify by this sole-begotten because it is a self-produced creature, being unconceived by a female. For the generation of it is unique as follows: when the male wants to procreate, he takes dung of an ox and shapes it into a spherical form resembling the world; he then rolls it from the hind parts from rising to setting, and himself looks towards the rising [i.e. east], in order that he may impart to it the form of the world; (for that is borne from the east wind to west, while the course of the stars is from the west to the east wind). Then, burying this sphere he places it down in the ground for twenty-eight days, (for in so many days the moon circulates through the twelve signs of the zodiac). By thus remaining under the moon, the genus of scarabs is engendered; and on the twenty-ninth day after having laid the sphere open, he throws it into the water, (for it recognizes that on that day there is a conjunction of the moon and sun, as well as the generation of the world). From [the sphere] thus opened in the water, the creatures, that is the scarabs, come forth. [The scarab also signifies] generation, for the reason mentioned earlier; and a father, because the scarab is generated by a father only; and the world, because in its generation it is made in the form of the world; and a man, because there is no female kind among them.

The reason why the Egyptians depict a scarab to signify ‘generation’ (γένεσιν), Horapollon explains, is that on the twenty-ninth day after a scarab has buried a ball of ox-dung there is a conjunction of the moon and sun ‘as well as the generation of the cosmos’ (ἔτι τε καὶ γένεσιν κόσμου). Furthermore, the generation of the cosmos occupies a hierarchical position with respect to the encosmic generation of the genus of scarabs for which it is explicitly the model.

5.3 Sensible nature and the intelligible cosmos

Coptic Christians – including, prominently, Shenoute – had raised objections to the pagan practice of exploiting hieroglyphs for the purpose of deriving metaphysical truths. The force of those objections is, however, somewhat obscured by the Christian propensity for employing variations on the very hermeneutical strategies that Shenoute, for example, takes pains to discredit when practiced by pagans. This propensity may nevertheless be legitimized by either or both of two considerations. First is the direction of argumentative momentum from prior causes to posterior effects, contrary to the practice of his pagan interlocutors. Insofar as pagan allegory reasons from posterior effects to prior causes it is liable (so the Christian objection runs) to arrive at extra-scriptural – and to that extent potentially erroneous – first principles. Within that context, however, the two procedures are not conceived of as dichotomous, but as opposite poles of the same axis equally accessible αἰτίας λογισμῶ. Pagan practice might still, then, be methodologically sound, but suspect on substantive doctrinal grounds.

The second possible legitimizing consideration is Shenoute’s use of the contentious hermeneutical strategies in the context of dialectical polemic, such that allegoristic reasoning is not employed *in propria persona*, but rather as a dialectical technique deployed to highlight errors and improprieties within paganism on the latter’s own terms. If this is what is at the root of Shenoute’s accusations of sophistry and allegorical obscurity on the part of his polemical opponents, the contention that Horapollon’s *Hieroglyphica* is developed in an environment responsive to Christian objections would have to address this second implied dialectical charge of methodological inadequacy in addition to the substantive accusations of doctrinal error.

In the absence of any explicitly addressed Christian objection, notwithstanding Horapollon’s own experience of Christian persecution, the difficulties of establishing a strong form of the claim that Horapollon is working to produce a polemical tool for use against Coptic suppression are, I think, decisive. However, the claim that the *Hieroglyphica* is a specifically Neoplatonic work does appear to be supportable by the available evidence. Even on the basis of broadly historical considerations the composition of the text within a corresponding environment does seem likely. Given both the subject-matter and the theological and Egyptizing interests of a number of Platonists of the period, evidence of some influence of that context on a text by a self-declared philosopher might reasonably be expected. At the very least, investigating elements of that

historical context has served as a useful heuristic strategy by which to assess the text's own explanatory strategies.

To reiterate, then, the relevant account of the methodological adequacy of its exegetical procedure is as follows. Neoplatonic linguistic theory develops in two stages, each deriving from Porphyrian reflection on Aristotelian texts. The first stage includes a bipartite theory of 'nominal assignment' (*ὀνομασία*), 'the first imposition of expressions' (*τῆς πρώτης θέσεως τῶν λέξεων*), in which names (broadly construed) are directly assigned to objects. This first imposition is complemented by an open-ended theory of 'second imposition' (*τῆς δευτέρας θέσεως*), in which terms for 'forms of linguistic expression' (*σχήματα λέξεως*) are directly assigned to the linguistic expressions assigned in the first imposition. The second stage is a tripartite theory whereby 'any simple significant expression is spoken and said of the thing signified' (*πᾶσα ἀπλῆ λέξις σημαντικὴ ὅταν κατὰ τοῦ σημαινομένου πράγματος ἀγορευθῇ τε καὶ λεχθῇ*) through the medium of concepts (*νοήματα*).

There are several layers of development at play here, and Horapollo's conception of the relationship between a hieroglyph, what it depicts, and what it means is, as we have seen, not unitary. That hieroglyphs do depict ostensibly identifiable (thereby nameable) referents is obviously a crucial distinction between glyphs and, for example, Greek alphabetic writing. That distinction relies on the fact that alphabetic Greek *as a script* is related to the meaning that it signifies purely conventionally. What that script signifies may be naturally related to the primary significatory relation between concepts ('movements in the soul') and features of the external world causally responsible for those movements, but the spoken or written expression of those concepts is, nonetheless, conventional.

This is crucially different in the case of a pictorial script like hieroglyphic Egyptian. In the unfolding perspective of Horapollo's semantics these glyphic depictions, however, do not directly signify the natural phenomena depicted, but they are criterially related to them in such a way as to legitimize inference from those phenomena to the meaning of the depicted elements. I can clarify this difference with one or two examples. The connection between the figure of a moon and a month³² is not only empirically observable, but semantic. What is meant by 'moon' is that celestial body by whose waxing and waning one measures the course of a month, not, for example, the body during the eclipse of which baboons decline to eat.³³ In other words, one way of explaining what 'moon' means is to specify its relationship with the duration of a month. This is the semantic relation upon which depends the second mode of hieroglyphic expression. A bee, in contrast, signifying 'a people obedient to their king' (*λαὸν πειθήνιον βασιλεῖ*)³⁴ is not eusocial by definition, but by nature: one doesn't identify a bee by whether it lives in a eusocial colony with a dominant reproductive female, and it is possible to identify a eusocial species without specifying that it is a bee. In the first example, the explanation specifies *criterial* conditions under which the item may be called a moon, whereas, in the second, it is merely *symptomatic* of the bee that it is eusocial: its hierarchical

social arrangements can be *inferred* from its depicted form or natural condition, but these are not defining characteristics.

Nor is the feature that distinguishes the allusive-symbolic mode of hieroglyphic expression from the mimetic or conceptual a symbolic substitution of the depiction for the item depicted, because in those cases the glyphs do not fulfil the role of an instance of the natural phenomena they depict. It is, however, symbolically dependent both on a hieroglyph depicting a natural phenomenon, and on a shared semantic relation between the relevant phenomenon and its depiction. It depends, in other words, for its viability as a symbol on both the mimetic and conceptual or figurative modes of expression described earlier. However, it is not, *qua* symbol, directly concerned with depicting a natural phenomenon, or with a shared meaning between the phenomenon depicted and the glyph, but these pictographic, semantic, and causal relations do have secondary functions, however. So, for example, a glyph depicting the scales of a snake can signify the stars by virtue of the pictographic representation of the speckling of the snake in allusion to the speckling of the stars. Similarly a glyph can allude to its meaning via shared *indicia*: a bat with teeth and breasts signifying a woman suckling and bringing up her children well (via shared tokens of good-nursing).

To the tripartite semantic analysis corresponds a tripartite theory of modes of intellection, namely, as we learn from Proclus and Damascius, ‘doxastic’ (*δοξαστική*), ‘discursive’ (*διανοητική*), and ‘intellective’ (*νοερά*).³⁵ It is tempting to suppose that these modes of intellection might be mapped directly onto the ‘three different types of letters’ (*γραμμαμάτων δὲ τρισσὰς διαφορὰς*) by which Egyptian is rendered. However, the three Porphyrian forms of meaningful hieroglyphic script – ‘epistolographic, hieroglyphic, and symbolic’ (*ἐπιστολογραφικῶν τε καὶ ἱερογλυφικῶν καὶ συμβολικῶν*) – ultimately elude any one-to-one schematic correspondence.

The first, mediating the spoken language through the epistolographic form of Egyptian script, does have the capacity to signify sensible phenomena and empirically accessible states of affairs. The second, however, signifies those phenomena as a conceptually unified whole, unmediated by the spoken language or its written form and therefore cannot be mapped onto the discursive mode of intellection. The third, in signifying the intelligible causes of phenomena allegoristically or allusively, does so mediately, but neither is this discursive – hence the need for indications and allusions reaching beyond the glyphs themselves to the intelligible realm. The Porphyrian claim then indicates neither three purely formal markers, nor three means of articulating exclusively doxastic significance, nor through the means identified in his theorization of nominal and predicative semantics, discursive content, but three modes of expression distinct in corresponding to a discrete realm of non-discursive expression. The specifically hieroglyphic and symbolic possibilities of Egyptian script are possible because hieroglyphic signs are themselves *composites* (*συνθήματα*) of sensible and intelligible elements as both material images and non-discursive thought,

and as such are susceptible of allegorical interpretation intellectual of intelligible realities.

Furthermore, though the fact that glyphs depict recognizable items is pointedly not constitutive of referential meaning, it does nonetheless simultaneously highlight the inescapably pictorial nature of glyphs. This achieves a certain kind of framing effect: hieroglyphs are perceptible objects because they are depictions of items accessible to (visual) sense-perception. Though their meanings are only indirectly determined by the relationship they have to the objects they depict. They do hinge on the fact that they are perceptible. A glyph's meaning, that is, is a reflection of the fact that it is an *aesthetic* object (in the Plotinian sense), rather than merely a *sensible* object of the kind it depicts and while that is a relation that depends in the first instance on glyphic mimesis of the sensible world, it also depends on the relation of glyphic mimesis of the sensible world to the aims and preoccupations of the author of the hieroglyphic inscription. These preoccupations in turn can be read off the meanings actually supplied for the glyphs and, as we have seen, they follow typical contours: biologically and culturally Egyptian (especially in Book One), humane, that is, ethical (hence the catalogue of virtues and vices in Book Two), but also occasionally cosmic (again, primarily in Book One).

On one hand, the text of the *Hieroglyphica* does not offer any explanatory hypotheses of a kind which explicitly addresses, for example, Iamblichus' theoretical considerations of how hieroglyphs might be thought to bear sapiential significance by means of independent or analytically simple principles. On the other hand, the multiple techniques that Horapollo employs for establishing significative possibilities (natural, conceptual, allusive) do allow us to concede that the *Hieroglyphica* then exhibits a number analytically constitutive and exegetically complex features of a Neoplatonic character.

Firstly, it uncontroversially maintains the tripartite distinction between linguistic expressions, their meanings, and the objects or name-bearers which they depict. Secondly, there is a raising of the natural, conceptual, and allusive semantic possibilities of hieroglyphic script through an apparently self-conscious representation of their depictive – and hence figurative and allusive – potential as symbols. Symbolic hieroglyphs are thereby capable of the kinds of intellectual activity we have seen in the cases of the glyphs of Horapollo's lion, toothed bat, and scarab: sacred admonitions, ethical exhortations, and cosmic disclosures. There may also then be an implicit hierarchy in force, reflective of something like the Neoplatonic curriculum of natural science, logic, and metaphysics, implying that movement between semantic and symbolic expression exemplifies movement between modes of intellection. Thirdly, in certain cases a procedure of principled (if not systematic) analytic explanatory ascent from empirical observation through discursive reason to metaphysical or cosmological insights is employed in the exegesis of the apprehensible content of the hieroglyphs. In this way the investigation acquires a depth that one would not traditionally be led to expect, or at any rate enables the reader to lend it such depth.

Notes

- 1 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 7.2.1–7.
- 2 Cf. Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.4: βουλόμενοί τε ἔτος εἰπεῖν; 1.68: Ἀνατολὴν δὲ λέγοντες; 1.69: Δύσιν δὲ λέγοντες; 1.70: Σκότος δὲ λέγοντες.
- 3 For example, consider the legalistic connotations of μηνύουσι (‘make a disclosure, lay an information against’) noted earlier.
- 4 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.19.1–5.
- 5 Plutarch, *Quaestiones convivales* 670c3: ὑπολάμπει τὰ ὄμματα καθεύδοντος; Aelian, *De natura animalium* 5.39.9–10: κρείττων ὕπνου λέων ἐστὶν ἀγρυπνῶν ἀεὶ.
- 6 The total number of meanings assigned (two hundred and forty-five) exceeds the number of *distinct* meanings (two hundred and thirty-nine) because half a dozen meanings are borne by more than one glyph. The total number of glyphs explained (one hundred and ninety-eight) exceeds the number of *distinct* glyphs (one hundred and eighty-six) because a dozen glyphs re-occur across sections. Similarly, the total number of items depicted (two hundred and forty-three) is inclusive of individual elements of composite and feature-marked glyphs. Cf. Introduction (p. 5) and Appendix 1.
- 7 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.2.
- 8 See Maspero, J., ‘Horapollon et la fin du paganisme égyptien’ in *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 11 (1914): p. 192.
- 9 Damascius, *Vita Isidori* fr. 98 (ap. Photium, *Bibl. codd.* 181, 242).
- 10 Damascius, *Vita Isidori* fr. 100.1–2 (ap. Photium, *Bibl. codd.* 181, 242).
- 11 Damascius, *Vita Isidori* fr. 102 (ap. Photium, *Bibl. codd.* 181, 242).
- 12 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.56.1–7.
- 13 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.10.19–20.
- 14 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.49.1–7.
- 15 Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 32.
- 16 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.3, 6, 8, 11–12.
- 17 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.6–8, 11, 13, 61, 63–64; 2.1, 29. Furthermore, in Iamblichus’ hieroglyphic exegeses the gifts proper to the incorporeal life are intellectual: virtue and wisdom. Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* 5.19.18–22.
- 18 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.7, 10, 19, 55.
- 19 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.1.1–10.
- 20 Sinuthius, *†ῤῥμοῖζε* = *I Am Amazed* = *Contra Origenistas et Gnosticos* (W54, Discourses 7, Work 5), HB 39.2–41.1; 0384–8.
- 21 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.3.1–11.
- 22 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.13.1–7.
- 23 Cf., e.g. Synesius, *De insomniis* 14.40; Sallustius, *De deis et mundo* 6.1.3–4; Hermias, *In Platonis Phaedrum scholia* 132.25, 167.23, 171.34, 172.4, 260.22; Hierocles, *In aureum carmen* 1.1.4, 11.32.12; Syrianus, *In Aristotelis metaphysica commentaria* 25.11, 41.14; Simplicius, *In Aristotelis quattuor libros de caelo commentaria* 7.117.16; Joannes Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi* 603.27, 604.4; *De opificio mundi* 252.18.
- 24 Proclus, *Theologia Platonica* passim.; *In Platonis rem publicam commentarii* passim.; *In Platonis Parmenidem* passim.; *In Platonis Timaeum commentaria* passim.; Damascius, *De principiis* 1.255.13, 1.268.14, etc.; *In Parmenidem* 10.5, 94.13, 137.21, etc.; *In Phaedonem* (versio 1) 478.1; *In Phaedonem* (versio 2) 95.1.
- 25 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.64.1–3.
- 26 Cf. Pseudo-Galen, *Introductio seu medicus* 14.698.10: καὶ πέμπτον παρεισάγει κατὰ τοὺς Στωϊκοὺς τὸ διῆκον διὰ πάντων πνεῦμα; Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes* 3.218.13: Στωικοὶ δὲ πνεῦμαν διῆκον καὶ διὰ τῶν εἰδεχθῶν; Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 9.127.5: ἐν γὰρ ὑπάρχει πνεῦμα τὸ διὰ παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου διῆκον ψυχῆς τρόπον.
- 27 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.2: ‘all things whatsoever, that are generated by divine providence in the world, undergo a corruption into it again’ (πάντα ὅσα ἐκ τῆς θείας προνοίας ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ γεννᾶται, ταῦτα πάλιν καὶ τὴν μείωσιν εἰς αὐτὰ λαμβάνειν).

- 28 Cf. Alcinous, *Epitome doctrinae Platonicae sive Διδασκαλικός* 10.
- 29 Perhaps traces of the influence of this can be found in the emphasis in Book One on φύσις, στοιχεῖον, τὸ διηκόν πνεῦμα, κόσμος, εἰμαρμένη, αἰνίττεσθαι; Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica*; φύσις: 1.8, 11, 14, 37, 46, 47, 49, 70; 2.37, 40, 61; στοιχεῖον: 1.1, 43; τὸ διηκόν πνεῦμα: 1.64; κόσμος: 1.2, 10, 12, 13, 21, 34, 49, 59, 60, 61, 63, 64; εἰμαρμένη: 1.13; αἰνίττεσθαι: 1.2, 44, 59, 62.
- 30 Cf., e.g. Plutarch's criticisms of Stoic physical explanations at *De Iside et Osiride* 45.369A, though he more than once argues favourably on that basis himself (*De Iside et Osiride* 40.367C; 41.367E).
- 31 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.10.1–29.
- 32 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.66.
- 33 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.14.
- 34 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.62.
- 35 See Proclus, *In Platonis rem publicam commentarii* 2.47.10–12 and Damascius, *In Phaedonem* (versio 1) 273.1–3, *In Phaedonem* (versio 2) 23.1–2.

Conclusion

I began by setting out an objective to be met in the course of the preceding chapters, namely, a reconstruction of a development in the history of philosophical linguistics on the subject of hieroglyphic Egyptian as a language uniquely adapted to the purposes and concerns of late Platonist metaphysics. By way of situating this reconstruction I began by describing the relationship between the standard philological account of hieroglyphs as theorized within Egyptology and the broader classical Greek tradition of hieroglyphic interpretation.

The use of hieroglyphic Egyptian in the latter tradition was not, however, conceived of as a purely orthographical expedient, extrinsic to the purposes of the material which it was employed to record, but, on the contrary, as constitutive of those purposes. Exegesis of hieroglyphs in Greek was legitimate because the purpose of the Greek glosses was precisely exegetical, not merely as records of the spoken language, but as ceremonial, as the glyphs were conceived to have originally been used. This difference in use was explained in terms of the metaphysical possibilities provided for by the doxastic, dianoetic, or intellectual properties of the scripts themselves; but insofar as they are explanations, the facts that are explained are precisely the range of the use of the scripts for respectively secular and religious purposes. The decisive characteristic of hieroglyphic Egyptian which motivated the tradition's explanatory endeavour, in other words, was not primarily – as with modern historical and philological inquiries – the script's relation to the morpho-syntactical substrate, but its symbolic and sapiential functions.

For that reason, within the framework of the contrast between the classical and Egyptological purposes in examining hieroglyphs, the absence from the Greek accounts of sustained observation of this substrate in favour of a symbolic or allegoristic conception of Egyptian hieroglyphs is neither an accidental feature of those accounts, conditioned by a declining understanding of their historical use, nor an obstacle to a developed hieroglyphic semantics. In fact, the former is both explicitly acknowledged as a classificatory feature, distinctly characterized by its function, and given independent theoretical justification. Crucially, even from the historical and philological perspective, as such the account also answers to features of genuinely Egyptian inscriptional practice.

One aspect of Horapollo's text is often a pressing problem for readers: namely, that what might count, by Horapollo's lights, as a correct explanation might be either lost, at least to post-decipherment Egyptologists, or unprincipled to the point of opacity. Even where Horapollo had correctly understood the meanings of hieroglyphs, the proper way to explain how they come to mean what they do was the province of the decipherment project, not allegorical interpretation. In an effort to resolve the problem, my initial aim was therefore to establish hieroglyphics both as a proper topic for philosophical investigation, and as methodologically principled. To that end I attempted to re-establish those standards in the context of later Neoplatonic theories of language.

Starting from the observation that Horapollo's explanations variously appeal to the referents, causes, and functions of the items depicted by hieroglyphs, as well as formal similarities, relational analogies, and shared attributes alluded to between the glyphs and the phenomena signified, distinguishable senses of 'explanations of meaning' are identifiable. The first operates along an axis that is recognisably semantic even by modern standards: an explanation of how individuals, particular items or features of the world, are meant. This was explored through both a bipartite theory of meaning according to which words directly signify things without the mediation of concepts, and another, tripartite, theory that explains the composition of these individuals in factual conditions, by virtue of which predicative statements directly signify concepts and thereby, indirectly things. In a sophisticated version of the theory, as developed by Iamblichus, words signify neither common concepts, nor particular things, but particular things insofar as they fall under common concepts. These variations are not, however, mutually exclusive, since the tripartite theory is dependent on the bipartite theory for the meaningfulness of the terms used in predicative statements verifiable or falsifiable by reference to the sensible world.

The next step was to supplement the semantic account with an independently characterizable substrate of inquiry into natural phenomena (*φυσιολογία*). The focus here was on hieroglyphic signs as depictions of *realia* of Egyptian provenance, reflecting in the phenomena of nature categorical hierarchies that might be thought to legitimize inference to the meanings of the glyphs. By this means context could be established that provide both a justificatory framework for the semantic account and a methodological principle legitimizing hieroglyphics as subject to an explicitly *exegetical* procedure. That context brought the Graeco-Roman lexicographical tradition together with the natural history tradition in order to highlight the ways in which typically figurative uses of hieroglyphs lend themselves to analysis in terms of a causal-empirical resource productive of a parallel conceptual-semantic range. This parallelism necessarily has consequences for and raises questions about how properly to assign genre to a work exploiting it. One possibility is to treat it as a Eiconian platypus with a dual that nature reflects a distinctively semiotic, rather than purely semantic interest. This alone will not account for the moral and allegorical content, however. For this reason a third type of explanation is called for.

This third type of explanation of meaning operates on a quite distinct axis, also semantic, in that it is still concerned to explain ways in which hieroglyphs mean what they do, but it also aligns the linguistic with a parallel metaphysical account originating with Iamblichus. There had also been earlier theoretical expressions of the particular superiority of hieroglyphic Egyptian for theological and philosophical purposes of this kind, both among the Egyptians themselves and in the Greek philosophical tradition, emerging, for example, in the hermetic corpus of writings. It is, however, with the specifically Neoplatonic development in the understanding of hieroglyphs that we are concerned here. The main reason for this particular focus is the scholastic and curricular inclinations of many of the representatives of Neoplatonism. This allows for far greater integration of their treatment of hieroglyphic Egyptian into the broader philosophical project in which they were engaged.

The view of the theological virtues of hieroglyphic Egyptian came under sharp attack from Christian quarters. The chief objections were to its proponents' reliance on extra-scriptural texts and the tendency to what its opponents saw as sophistical lines of reasoning. Two texts belonging to the Nag' -Hammâdi corpus, *The Gospel of Truth* and *The Discourse on the Eighth and Ninth*, had explained the superiority of hieroglyphs for such purposes in terms of the non-discursive unity of the hieroglyphic character in signifying its meaning – a feature of their use given similar emphasis in Plotinus' reflections on the possibility of formulating higher order truths as complete thoughts.

I further examined the methodological rationale for Iamblichus' use of intellectual interpretation (*νοερά θεωρία*) as a means of aligning the tripartite theory of meaning within the logico-metaphysical context it subsequently acquired. In this way the three modes of hieroglyphic expression could be established within a framework of hieroglyphic exegesis according to a process of 'analytic ascent'. Thereby proceeding from the sensible phenomena depicted by hieroglyphs, through the universal concepts under which they fall to acquire meaning, the exegete can arrive at their intelligible causes. The three modes of expression, on this reading, are the doxastic language of sensible phenomena, the direct representation of complete thoughts as an ungenerated unity, and the symbolic allusion to primary intelligible causes. It is the nature of the hieroglyphs that facilitates the procedure. They are composites of material images and non-discursive thought, and are thus capable of symbolizing intelligible realities. This is particularly crucial for the viability of 'intellectual interpretation' of hieroglyphs, precisely because it makes natural signs subject to the kind of discursive inferential procedures we saw in Chapter 3 that lead to metaphysical insights.

The range of evidence presented in detail in the course of this investigation and briefly outlined again in this Conclusion supports several lines of argument for thinking that the variety of uses of hieroglyphs recognized by the Greek tradition generally, and Horapollo in particular, is both more nuanced and more theoretically stable than could properly be judged independently of consideration of the philosophical context. It will be helpful then at this point to take

the opportunity to give a concise statement of the salient distinctions those uses observe. These sign uses may be summarized as follows.

- 1 *epistolographic*, directly recording the phonetic content of the spoken language
(in evidence in the *Hieroglyphica* only in a handful of Coptic words preserved in Greek script)
- 2 *pictographic*, by mimesis signifying the referent depicted by the hieroglyph
(it is in fact unclear whether the Greek tradition ever conceives of the depictive properties of hieroglyphs as purely pictographic in this sense)
- 3 *figurative*, by formal (or phonetic) affinity
(extensively represented in the *Hieroglyphica*, often conjunctively in the juxtaposition of natural signs as an exegetical resource for both the interpretation and production of hieroglyphic signs)
- 4 *allegorical*, by allusion
(also widely exemplified in the *Hieroglyphica*, often without any explicit distinction being made between the allegorical and the figurative uses)

In certain cases the latter two uses enumerated are exemplified by a single hieroglyphic example. Horapollo does not use the hieroglyph of a dung-beetle,¹ for example, in a non-symbolic *pictographic* mode of expression, to mean *Scarabaeus pilularius*. However, according to the *figurative* use, by means of a conceptual relation (in the sense of employing metonymy or synecdoche, as outlined in Champollion's analysis), the scarab can signify the predicable attribute 'sole-begotten'. Also, in accordance with the *allegorical* use, by virtue of a shared point of comparison, a rolling, circular passage, a periodic generative capacity, 'the sun'.²

As they appear in Horapollo, the pictographic, figurative, and allegorical types are furthermore symbolic in the technical sense according to which each of the three semantic classification-types is assigned a corresponding role in what I have identified as the non-discursive presentation of ethical injunctions and cosmic disclosures. This is possible because a hieroglyph for Horapollo is neither exclusively the sensible object it depicts for perception, nor exclusively the apprehensible content it signifies for thought. A hieroglyph is a non-discursive unity of object and thought that is nonetheless amenable to discursive analysis as a sensible-intelligible composite, and as such, a symbol in something like the etymological sense.

In its capacity as a linguistic sign, then, a single example might span the three – pictographic, conceptual, and allusive – expressive modes, but as a hieroglyphic symbol it also intelligibly encompasses the perceptible, natural, and cosmic realms: (i) the empirically perceptible creature, *Scarabaeus pilularius*; (ii) the conceptual apprehensible natural-causal content, 'sole-begotten'; and (iii) the metaphysical principle allegorically alluded to, namely, a 'periodic generative capacity'.

To the extent that the *Hieroglyphica* does exhibit characteristically Neoplatonic features, three particularly striking aspects emerge from the account of their significance for the original reconstructive aim.

Firstly, the distinctions, apparently so clear-cut at the outset, between Egyptology's philological interest in Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica*, and what it conceived, in accordance with its methods for assessing its contribution to that interest, the text's excesses and failures to be, are a good deal less self-evident than they may initially have seemed. Both Gardiner's charges of unsound claims and suspect methods and the valuable correctives of Vergote and Sbordone are born out of an interest in a discipline-specific conception of what constitutes an explanation of the meaning of hieroglyphs. This gives rise to either or both of two possible consequences. The first is that the full range of the text's own theoretical orientation, or the possible variety of hieroglyphic meaning for which it provides, is therefore blocked in advance in favour of only those explanations that elucidate hieroglyphic materials significant for their philological content. The second is that any area within that range that fails to demonstrate the relevant philological credentials is deprecated as failing to measure up to theoretically exacting standards of any kind. But it is often precisely the sorts of uses of hieroglyphs recognized in, for example, the varied senses in which 'sense-signs' function that inform the deprecated explanations the text offers. This may be, for example, through formal and phonetic affinities that explain glyphic allusions to shared comparators, or through extended secondary uses that might more formally be designated symbolic by virtue of their quasi-gestural use in the roles of those natural items they depict.

Secondly, what is perhaps most important is not only the vindication of the explanations by appropriately selective citation of the methodological resources available, but also the pivotal role hieroglyphs play in justifying the development of those theoretical methods. There is, however, a focal adjustment required in order to see this. In other words, even if the philosophical context I have described were not the instigating circumstance of its composition, then at least it still appears to have been the appropriated mechanism *according to* which it was composed. We need not choose to read the *Hieroglyphica* as an exercise in the derivation of the rules governing hieroglyphic practice from insufficient or unreliable evidence. We might do better to recognize the fact that certain hieroglyphs have known meanings (provided by a natural-historical resource), which legitimizes an increasingly productive hermeneutic (such as we find in Book Two of the *Hieroglyphica*) for expressing allusive and symbolic meanings – otherwise unavailable to non-hieroglyphic forms of language – for signs with previously unknown meanings.

Thirdly, the repeated transitions from natural sign to hieroglyphic sign, from logic to metaphysics, are transitions from the point of view of the distinctions presupposed. But this does not entail that those distinctions are the more fundamental basis upon which to establish the continuity and cohesion of the exegesis exploiting such transitions. The basis for the charge against the *Hieroglyphica* that its explanations are 'fantastic' is in fact what gives the transition

its significance. It is not the transgression of historical standards of enquiry by which it thereby is deprived of significance, but what makes the transition significant as a *symbol*.

What distinguishes symbolic glyphs is that they are glyphs put to non-pictographic (i.e. non-nominal) and non-predicative uses. Their use is an extension of these functions in such a way as to separate them through a ‘vertical’ relation of dependence they have on the non-symbolic horizontally related Porphyrian uses. This vertical relation is the basis of their claim to symbolic depth. Here I am concerned neither with an instance of nominally identification of leonine vigilance or maternal solicitude, nor with a case of predicatively attributing these, but with an *admonition* of vigilance and an *exhortation* to solicitude. The glyph is not presented as an ostensive substitute for the sensible or perceptible item it depicts, but as itself a sensible or perceptible item but with an intelligible function above and beyond those of its *nominatum*.

As we have seen, all three modes of hieroglyphic are in fact susceptible of expression, or ‘translation’ into Greek, but the particular superiority of hieroglyphic Egyptian over Greek as a wholly symbolic language nonetheless entails the impossibility of such symbolism being conducted in the latter language. However, this impossibility is not a consequence of an independently motivated prescription of hieroglyphs for symbolic use, but that it is so prescribed is a consequence of a hieroglyph’s peculiar capacity for being put to use as allegory, allusion, and symbol. Ultimately, then, it is in the diverging explanatory orientation of its two books and the consequent facility of its explanations for generating both signs and meanings, hieroglyphic, natural, and divine, that the unique value of Horapollo’s *Hieroglyphica* lies.

Notes

- 1 Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 1.10. [Πῶς μονογενές].
- 2 Cf. Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica* 2.46. [Πῶς ἄνθρωπον ἰατρεύοντα ἑαυτὸν ἀπὸ χρησμοῦ]; 2.49. [Πῶς ἄνθρωπον ἀσφαλῶς οἰκοῦντα πόλιν]; 2.50. [Πῶς ἄνθρωπον ἀσθενῶς ἔχοντα, καὶ ὑφ’ ἐτέρου καταδιωκόμενον]; 2.52. [Πῶς ἄνθρωπον δηλοῦσιν ἀσθενῇ καὶ προπετενόμενον]; 2.53. [Πῶς γυναῖκα θηλάζουσιν, καὶ καλῶς ἀνατρέφουσιν].



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Appendixes



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Appendix 1

Horapollo’s hieroglyphs and their meanings¹

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.1	ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην (the sun and the moon); ὄφιν ἔχοντα τὴν οὐρὰν ὑπὸ τὸ λοιπὸν σῶμα κρυπτομένην (a serpent with its tail concealed by the rest of its body)	αἰῶνα (eternity)
1.2	ὄφιν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐσθίοντα οὐράν, ἐστιγμένον φολίσι ποικίλαις (a serpent devouring its own tail, marked with variegated scales)	κόσμον (the universe)
1.3	Ἴσιν, τουτέστι γυναῖκα (Isis, that is a woman)	ἐνιαυτόν (the year); τὴν θεόν (the goddess [Isis])
1.4	βάϊν (a branch); σελήνην ἐπεστραμμένην εἰς τὸ κάτω (the moon with its horns turned downward)	μῆνα (the month)
1.5	τέταρτον ἀρούρας (the fourth part of an aroura)	τὸ ἐνιστάμενον ἔτος (the current year)
1.6	ἰέρακα (a hawk)	Θεόν (a god); ὕψος (something sublime); ταπείνωσιν (something lowly); ὑπεροχὴν (superiority); αἷμα (blood); νίκην (victory); Ἄρεα (Ares); Ἀφροδίτην (Aphrodite)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.7	ὁ ἰέραξ (the hawk)	ψυχὴν (the soul)
1.8	δύο ἰέρακας (two hawks [the male, the female])	Ἄρεα καὶ Ἀφροδίτην (Ares and Aphrodite)
1.9	δύο κορώνας (two crows)	γάμον (marriage)
1.10	κάνθαρον (a scarab)	μονογενές (sole-begotten); γένεσιν (birth); πατέρα (a father); κόσμον (the world); ἄνδρα (man)
1.11	γῦπα (a vulture)	μητέρα (a mother); βλέψιν (sight); ὄριον (boundaries); πρόγνωσιν (foreknowledge); ἐνιαυτόν (the year); οὐρανίαν (the heavens); ἐλεήμονα (pity); Ἀθηνᾶν (Athena); Ἥραν (Hera); δραχμὰς δύο (two drachmas)
1.12	κάνθαρον καὶ γῦπα (a beetle [scarab] and a vulture); γῦπα καὶ κάνθαρον (a vulture and a beetle)	Ἥφαιστον (Hephaistus); Ἀθηνᾶν (Athena)
1.13	ἀστέρα (a star)	Θεὸν ἐγκόσμιον (the encosmic God); εἰμαρμένην (fate); τὸν πέντε ἀριθμόν (the number 5)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.14	κυνοκέφαλον (a baboon)	σελήνην (the moon); οἰκουμένην (the inhabited earth); γράμματα (letters); ἱερέα (a priest); ὀργήν (anger); κόλυμβον (a diver)
1.15	κυνοκέφαλον σχήματι τοιῶδε· ἐστῶτα καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐρανὸν ἐπαίροντα, βασίλειόν τε ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχοντα (a baboon, but in this way: standing, with its hands raised to heaven and a crown on its head)	σελήνης ἀνατολήν (moonrise)
1.16	κυνοκέφαλον καθήμενον ζῶον (the baboon, but seated)	ἰσημερίας δύο (the two equinoxes)
1.17	λέοντα (a lion)	θυμόν (spiritedness)
1.18	λέοντος τὰ ἔμπροσθεν (the forequarters of a lion)	ἀλκὴν (strength)
1.19	λέοντος κεφαλὴν (the head of a lion)	ἐγρηγορότα ἢ καὶ φύλακα (that one is wide awake and on guard)
1.20	τῷ αὐτῷ σημείῳ (the same sign)	φοβερὸν (fear)
1.21	λέοντα (a lion); τρεῖς ὑδρίας μεγάλας (three great water-jars); οὐρανὸν καὶ γῆν ὕδωρ ἀναβλύζουσιν (water gushing forth over heaven and earth)	Νείλου ἀνάβασιν (the rising of the Nile)
1.22	θυμιατήριον καιόμενον καὶ ἐπάνω καρδίαν (a burning censer and a heart above it)	Αἴγυπτον (Egypt)
1.23	ὄνοκέφαλον (a man with an ass's head)	ἄνθρωπον μὴ ἀποδημήσαντα τῆς πατρίδος (a man who has never travelled)
1.24	δύο κεφαλὰς ἀνθρώπων ζωγραφοῦσι, τὴν μὲν τοῦ ἄρσενος ἔσω βλέπουσαν, τὴν δὲ θηλυκὴν ἔξω (two human heads, one a male, looking in, the other a female, looking out)	φυλακτήριον (a phylactery)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.25	<i>βάτραχον</i> (a frog)	<i>ἄνθρωπον ἄπλαστον</i> (an unformed man)
1.26	<i>λαγῶν</i> (a hare)	<i>ἄνοιξιν</i> (an opening)
1.27	<i>γλῶσσαν καὶ ὕφαιμον ὀφθαλμόν</i> (a tongue and a bloodshot eye); <i>γλῶσσαν καὶ χεῖρα ὑποκάτω</i> (a tongue and a hand beneath)	<i>τὸ λέγειν</i> (speech)
1.28	<i>ἀριθμὸν , αὗε´</i> (the number 1,095, which is the number of a triennium)	<i>ἄφωνίαν</i> (silence)
1.29	<i>ἀέρος φωνήν</i> (the sound of air, that is thunder)	<i>φωνήν μακρόθεν</i> (a distant voice)
1.30	<i>παπύρου δέσμην</i> (a bundle of papyri)	<i>ἀρχαιογονίαν</i> (ancient descent)
1.31	<i>ἀρχὴν στόματος</i> (the beginning of the mouth)	<i>γεῶσιν</i> (taste)
1.32	<i>δεκαεὺς ἀριθμόν</i> (the number 16)	<i>ἡδονήν</i> (pleasure)
1.33	<i>δύο δεκαεὺς ἀριθμούς</i> (two 16s)	<i>συνουσίαν</i> (copulation)
1.34	<i>φοίνικα τὸ ὄρνεον</i> (the phoenix)	<i>ψυχὴν ἐνταῦθα πολλὸν χρόνον</i> <i>διατρίβουσιν</i> (the soul delaying here a long time); <i>πλήμμυραν</i> (a flood)
1.35	<i>φοίνικα τὸ ὄρνεον</i> (a phoenix)	<i>τὸν χρόνῳ ἀπὸ ξένης</i> <i>ἐπιδημοῦντα</i> (the return of the long-absent traveller)
1.36	<i>ἰβιν</i> (an ibis)	<i>καρδίαν</i> (the heart)
1.37	<i>οὐρανὸν δρόσον βάλλοντα</i> (the heavens dropping dew)	<i>παιδείαν</i> (education)
1.38	<i>μέλαν καὶ κόσκινον καὶ σχοινίον</i> (ink, and a sieve, and a reed)	<i>αἰγύπτια γράμματα</i> (Egyptian letters); <i>ἱερογραμματεῖα</i> (a scribe); <i>πέρας</i> (a limit)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.39	κύννα (a dog)	ἱερογραμματεία (a sacred scribe); προφήτην (a prophet); ἐνταφιαστήν (an embalmer); σπλῆνα (the spleen); ὄσφρησιν (odour); γέλωτα (laughter); πταρμόν (sneezing); ἀρχήν (rule); δικαστήν (a judge)
1.40	τῷ κυνὶ καὶ βασιλικὴν στολὴν παρακειμένην, [σχῆμα γυμνόν] (the royal stole beside the dog, who is naked)	ἀρχὴν ἢ δικαστήν (a magistrate or judge)
1.41	φύλακα οἰκίας (a house-guard)	παστοφόρον (the shrine-bearer)
1.42	ἄνθρωπον τὰς ὥρας ἐσθίοντα (a man eating the hours)	ὠροσκόπον (the horoscopist)
1.43	πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ (fire and water)	ἀγνείαν (purity)
1.44	ἰχθύν (a fish)	ἀθέμιτον ἢ καὶ μύσος (the lawless or abominable)
1.45	ὄφιν (a serpent)	στόμα (the mouth)
1.46	ταῦρον ὕγιῃ φύσιν ἔχοντα (a bull with his member erect)	ἀνδρεῖον μετὰ σωφροσύνης (courage with temperance)
1.47	ταύρου ὠτίον (the ear of a bull)	ἀκοήν (hearing)
1.48	τράγον (a goat)	αἰδοῖον ἀνδρὸς πολυγόνου (the member of a fecund man)
1.49	ὄρυγα (an oryx)	ἀκαθαρσίαν (impurity)
1.50	μωῖαν (a mouse)	ἀφανισμόν (disappearance)
1.51	μύρμηκα (a fly)	ἰταμότητα (impudence)
1.52	μύρμηκα (an ant)	γνώσιν (knowledge)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.53	χηναλώπεκα (a vulpanser [Chenopolex])	υἶὸν (a son)
1.54	πελεκᾶνα (a pelican)	ἄνουν (a fool, foolishness); ἄφρονα (imprudence)
1.55	κουκουφάν (a stork)	εὐχαριστίαν (gratitude)
1.56	ἵπποποτάμου ὄνυχας δύο κάτω βλέποντας (two hippopotamus claws, turned down)	ἄδικον καὶ ἀχάριστον (the unjust and the ungrateful)
1.57	περιστεράν (a dove)	ἀχάριστον πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτοῦ εὐεργέτας (ingratitude for kindness to oneself)
1.58	πόδας ἀνθρώπου ἐν ὕδατι περιπατοῦντας (men walking on water)	τὸ ἀδύνατον γενέσθαι (what cannot happen)
1.59	ὄφιν κοσμοειδῶς ἐσχηματισμένον, οὗ τὴν οὐρὰν ἐν τῷ στόματι ποιοῦσι, τὸ δὲ ὄνομα τοῦ βασιλέως ἐν μέσῳ τῷ εἰλίγματι (a serpent represented as the cosmos, with its tail in its mouth and the name of the king written in the middle of the coils)	βασιλέα κράτιστον (a very powerful king)
1.60	τὸν ὄφιν ἐγρηγορότα (the serpent in a state of watchfulness)	βασιλέα φύλακα (the king as guardian)
1.61	αὐτὸν ὄφιν ἐν μέσῳ δὲ αὐτοῦ οἴκον μέγαν (the serpent and in the middle a great palace)	κοσμοκράτορα (a cosmic ruler)
1.62	μέλισσαν (a bee)	λαὸν πειθήνιον βασιλεῖ (the people obedient to the king)
1.63	ἡμίτομον ὄφιν (a serpent cut in half)	βασιλέα μέρους κόσμου κρατοῦντα (the king ruling part of the cosmos)
1.64	τὸν ὁλόκληρον ὄφιν (a complete serpent)	παντοκράτορα (the almighty (pantocrator))
1.65	δύο πόδας ἀνθρώπου ἐν ὕδατι (two human feet in water)	γναφέα (a fuller)
1.66	σελήνης σχῆμα (the figure of a moon)	μῆνα (a month)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
1.67	κροκόδειλον (a crocodile)	ἄρπαγα (a plunderer); πολύγονον (a fecund man); μαινόμενον (a madman)
1.68	δύο ὀφθαλμοὺς κροκοδείλου (two crocodile's eyes)	ἀνατολήν (the rising [sun])
1.69	κροκόδειλον κεκυφότα (a crocodile hunched up)	δύσιν (a sunset)
1.70	κροκοδείλου οὐράν (the tail of a crocodile)	σκότος (shadows)
2.1	ἀστέρα (a star)	θεόν (a god); δείλην (twilight); νύκτα (night); χρόνον (time); ψυχὴν ἀνθρώπου (a man's soul)
2.2	ἄετοῦ νεοσσόν (an eagle's chick)	ἄρρενογόνον (the bearing of male children); κυκλοειδόν (a circle); σπέρμα ἀνθρώπου (a man's sperm)
2.3	δύο πόδας συνηγμένους καὶ βεβηκότας (two feet together and standing)	δρόμον ἡλίου τὸν ἐν ταῖς χειμερίαις τροπαῖς (the course of the sun at the winter solstice)
2.4	ἀνθρώπου καρδίαν φάρυγγος ἡρτημένην (a man's heart hanging from his gullet)	ἀγαθοῦ ἀνθρώπου στόμα (the mouth of a good man)
2.5	χεῖρες ἡ μὲν ὄπλον κρατοῦσα, ἡ δὲ τόξον (a man's hands, one of them holding a shield and the other a bow)	πολέμου στόμα (the jaws of battle)
2.6	δάκτυλον (a finger)	Ἀνθρώπου στόμαχον (a man's stomach)
2.7	αἰδοῖον χειρὶ κρατούμενον (a penis pressed by a hand)	σωφροσύνην ἀνθρώπου (temperance in a man)
2.8	Ἄνθη ἀνεμώνης (an anemone flower)	νόσον (human disease)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.9	<i>τὸ νωτιαῖον ὀστοῦν</i> (a spine)	<i>ὀσφύν</i> (the loins); <στάσιν> ἀνθρώπου (masculinity)
2.10	<i>ὄρυγος ὀστοῦν</i> (a quail's bone)	<i>διαμονὴν καὶ ἀσφάλειαν</i> (the enduring and stable)
2.11	<i>ἄνθρωποι δύο δεξιούμενοι</i> (two men in an attitude of greeting)	<i>ὁμόνοιαν</i> (unanimity)
2.12	<i>ἄνθρωπος καθωπλισμένος καὶ τοξέων</i> (a man in armour shooting an arrow)	<i>ὄχλον</i> (the mob)
2.13	<i>ἀνθρώπου δάκτυλος</i> (a man's finger)	<i>ἀναμέτρησιν</i> (measurement)
2.14	<i>ἡλίου κύκλον σὺν ἀστέρι μετὰ ἡλίου</i> <i>δίσκου δίχα τετμημένου</i> (a solar disk with stars, and the disk is cut in two)	<i>γυναῖκα ἔγκυον</i> (a pregnant woman)
2.15	<εἷς> <i>τὴν ἀνατολὴν ἰέραξ ἐπὶ μετεώρου</i> <i>θέων ἀνέμους</i> (a hawk rising towards the gods); <i>ἰέραξ διατεταμένος τὰς πτέρυγας ἐν ἀέρι</i> <i>οἶον πτέρυγας ἔχοντα</i> (a hawk with its wings expanded in the air)	<i>ἀνέμους</i> (winds)
2.16	<i>καπνὸς εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀναβαίνων</i> (smoke mounting towards heaven)	<i>πῦρ</i> (fire)
2.17	<i>βοὸς ἄρρενος κέρας</i> (a bull's horn)	<i>ἔργον</i> (work)
2.18	<i>βοὸς θηλείας κέρας</i> (a cow's horn)	<i>ποινὴν</i> (punishment)
2.19	<i>προτομὴ σὺν μαχαίρᾳ</i> (the bust with a sword)	<i>ἀνοσιότητα</i> (impiety)
2.20	<i>ἵππος ποτάμιος</i> (a hippopotamus)	<i>ὥραν</i> (an hour)
2.21	<i>ἔλαφος κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν βλαστάνει τὰ</i> <i>κέρατα</i> (a stag's horns)	<i>πολυχρόνια</i> (a long space of time)
2.22	<i>λύκος ἀπεστραμμένος</i> (a wolf turning back); <i>κύων [ἀπεστραμμένος]</i> (a dog [turning back])	<i>ἀποστροφὴν</i> (escape)
2.23	<i>ἄκοή</i> (an ear)	<i>μέλλον ἔργον</i> (future work)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.24	σφήξ ἀεροπετής (a wasp in flight); αἷμα κροκοδείλου βλαπτικόν (the poisonous blood of a crocodile)	βλαπτικόν (noxious); φονέα (murderer)
2.25	νυκτικόραξ (the night-owl)	αἰφνίδιον θάνατον (a sudden death)
2.26	παγίς (a snare); ὠόν (an egg)	ἔρωτα ὡς θήραν θανάτου (love as a wild beast); πτερὸν ἄερα (winged air); υἷόν (son)
2.27	λόγοι καὶ φύλλα (word and leaves); βιβλίον ἐσφραγισμένον (a signed book)	παλαιότητα (the very old)
2.28	κλίμαξ (a ladder)	πολιορκίαν (a siege)
2.29	γράμματα ἑπτὰ, ἐν δυσὶ δακτύλοις περιεχόμενα (seven letters surrounded by two fingers)	ἄπειρον (the infinite); μοῦσαν (a muse); μοῖραν (fate)
2.30	γραμμὴ ὀρθὴ μία ἅμα γραμμῇ ἐπικεκαμμένη (a line superimposed on another)	[<ἑνδεκα> γραμμάς ἐπιπέδους (ten straight lines)
2.31	χελιδόνα (a swallow)	τὴν ὅλοσχερῇ κτῆσιν γονικὴν καταλειφθεῖσαν τοῖς υἱέσι (the entire wealth of parents left to children)
2.32	μέλαιναν περιστερὰν (a black dove)	γυναῖκα χήραν ἐπιμείναςαν ἄχρι θανάτου (a widow remaining faithful to death)
2.33	ἰχνεύμονα (a weasel [ichneumon])	ἄνθρωπον ἀσθενῇ καὶ μὴ δυνηθέντα ἑαυτῷ βοηθῆσαι δι' ἑαυτοῦ, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἄλλων ἐπικουρίας (a man who is weak and unable to take care of himself, but is dependent on others)
2.34	ὀρίγανον (origanum)	λεῖψιν μυρμήκων (the absence of ants)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.35	σκορπίον καὶ κροκόδειλον (a scorpion and a crocodile)	ἄνθρωπον ἐχθρόν, ἐτέρῳ ἴσῳ ἐναντιούμενον (a man at war with another)
2.36	γαλῆν (the marten)	γυναῖκα ἀνδρὸς ἔργα πράττουσαν (a woman who has acted like a man)
2.37	χοῖρον (a pig)	ἄνθρωπον ἐξώλη (a pernicious man)
2.38	λέοντα γράφουσιν ἐξοστεῖζοντα τοὺς ιδίους σκύμνους (a lion tearing its cubs to pieces)	θυμὸν ἄμετρον, ὥστε καὶ ἐκ τούτου πυρέττειν τὸν θυμούμενον (unmeasurable anger, as if the spirits were in a fever from it)
2.39	κύκνον (a swan)	γέροντα μουσικόν (a musical old man)
2.40	δύο κορώνας (two crows)	ἄνδρα συγγινόμενον τῇ ἑαυτοῦ γυναικί (a man mating with his wife)
2.41	κάνθαρον τυφλόν (a blind beetle)	ἄνδρα δὲ ὑπὸ ἡλιακῆς ἀκτῖνος πυρέξαντα καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἀποθανόντα (a man dead from a sunstroke)
2.42	ἡμίονον (a mule)	γυναῖκα δὲ στεῖραν (a barren woman)
2.43	ταῦρον ἐπὶ τὰ ἀριστερὰ νεύοντα (a bull facing the left); ταῦρον ἐπὶ τὰ δεξιὰ νεύοντα (a bull facing the right)	γυναῖκα γεννήσασαν θήλεα βρέφη (a woman who has borne female infants); γυναῖκα γεννήσασαν ἄρρενα βρέφη (a woman who has borne male infants)
2.44	νεκρὸν ἵππον (a dead horse)	σφῆκας (wasps)
2.45	ἵππον πατοῦσαν λύκον (a mare kicking a wolf)	γυναῖκα ἐκτιτρώσκουσιν (a woman who has aborted)
2.46	φάσσαν κρατοῦσαν φύλλον δάφνης (a pigeon holding a laurel-leaf)	ἄνθρωπον ἰατρεύοντα ἑαυτὸν ἀπὸ χρημοῦ (a man who has been cured by the answer of an oracle)
2.47	σκώληκας (worms [maggots])	κώνωπας πολλούς (gnats swarming)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.48	περιστερὰν ἔχουσιν τὰ ὀπίσθια ὀρθὰ (a pigeon with its hind parts erect)	ἄνδρα μὴ ἔχοντα χολήν, ἀλλ' ἀφ' ἑτέρου δεχόμενον (a man who by his own nature has no bile but receives it from another)
2.49	ἀετὸν λίθον βαστάζοντα (an eagle carrying off a stone)	ἄνθρωπον ἀσφαλῶς οἰκοῦντα πόλιν (a man who lives safely in a city)
2.50	ὠτίδα καὶ ἵππον (a horse and a bustard)	ἄνθρωπον ἀσθενῶς ἔχοντα, καὶ ὑφ' ἑτέρου καταδιωκόμενον (a weak man pursued by another)
2.51	στρουθὸν καὶ γλαῦκα (a sparrow and an owl)	ἄνθρωπον προσφεύγοντα τῷ ἰδίῳ πάτρωνι καὶ μὴ βοηθούμενον (a man fleeing to his patron and not being aided by him)
2.52	νυκτερίδα (a bat)	ἄνθρωπον δηλοῦσιν ἀσθενῆ καὶ προπετενόμενον (a weak man who is rash)
2.53	νυκτερίδα πάλιν ἔχουσιν ὀδόντας καὶ μαστοὺς (a bat with teeth and breasts)	γυναῖκα θηλάζουσιν, καὶ καλῶς ἀνατρέφουσιν (a woman giving suck and nursing her children well)
2.54	τρυγὸνα (a turtle-dove)	ἄνθρωπον κηλούμενον ὀρχήσῃ καὶ αὐλητικῇ κηλούμενον (a man who loves dancing and flute playing)
2.55	τέττιγα (a cicada)	ἄνθρωπον μυστικόν καὶ αὐλητικῇ κηλούμενον (a man of the mysteries and initiated)
2.56	ἀετὸν (an eagle)	βασιλέα ἰδιάζοντα, καὶ μὴ ἐλεοῦντα ἐν τοῖς πταίσμασι (a king living in retirement and giving no pity to those in fault)
2.57	φοίνικα τὸ ὄρνεον (the phoenix)	ἀποκατάστασιν πολυχρόνιον (a long-enduring restoration)
2.58	πελαργόν (a stork)	φιλοπάτορα (filial affection)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.59	ἔχιν (a viper)	γυναῖκα μισοῦσαν τὸν ἐαυτῆς ἄνδρα, καὶ ἐπιβουλεύουσαν αὐτῷ εἰς θάνατον, μόνον δὲ διὰ μῖζιν κολακεύουσαν αὐτόν (a wife who hates her husband and plots his death, and mates with him only through flattery)
2.60	ἔχιδναν (a viper)	τέκνα δηλοῦσιν ἐπιβουλεύοντα ταῖς μητράσι (children who hate their mother)
2.61	βασιλίσκον (a basilisk)	ἄνθρωπον δηλοῦσιν ὑπὸ κατηγορίας λοιδορηθέντα καὶ ἀσθενήσαντα (a man reviled by denunciation and fallen sick because of it)
2.62	σαλαμάνδραν (a salamander)	ἄνθρωπον ὑπὸ πυρὸς <οὐ> καιόμενον (a man <not> burned by fire)
2.63	ἀσπάλακα (a mole)	ἄνθρωπον τυφλόν (a blind man)
2.64	μύρμηκα καὶ πτερὰ νυκτερίδος (an ant and bat's wings)	ἄνθρωπον ἀπρόϊτον (a man who stays indoors)
2.65	κάστορα (a beaver)	ἄνθρωπον διὰ τῆς οἰκείας ἐξωλείας βλαπτόμενον (a man prevented from committing suicide)
2.66	πίθηκον ἔχοντα ὀπίσω ἕτερον μικρὸν πίθηκον (a monkey with a little monkey behind him)	ἄνθρωπον κληρονομηθέντα ὑπὸ μεμισημένου τέκνου (a man whose heir is a son whom he hates)
2.67	πίθηκον οὔροῦντα (a monkey urinating)	ἄνθρωπον τὰ ἴδια ἐλαττώματα κρύπτοντα (a man concealing his inferiority)
2.68	αἶγα (a goat)	τινα κατὰ τὸ μᾶλλον ἀκούοντα (a man of sharp hearing)
2.69	ῥαῖναν (a hyena)	τινὰ δὲ ἄστατον, καὶ μὴ μένοντα ἐν ταύτῳ, ἀλλ' ὅτε μὲν ἰσχυρόν, ὅτε δὲ ἀσθενῆ (someone unstable and not remaining in the same state, either because of strength or weakness)
2.70	δύο δέρματα, ὧν τὸ μὲν ῥαίνης ἐστί, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο παρδάλεως (two skins, one of which is a hyena-skin, the other a leopard-skin)	ἄνθρωπον ὑπὸ ἐλαττόνων ἡττώμενον (a man who is worsted by weaker men)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.71	ὕαιναν ἐπὶ τὰ δεξιὰ στρεφομένην (a hyena facing the right)	ἄνθρωπον τοῦ ἰδίου ἐχθροῦ περιγεγνόμενον (a man superior to his enemies)
2.72	δέρμα ὑαίνης (a hyena-skin)	ἄνθρωπον παρελθόντα τὰς ἐπενεχθείσας αὐτῷ συμφορὰς ἀφόβως (a man fearlessly confronting misfortunes which have come upon him, even to the point of death)
2.73	λύκον ἀπολέσαντα τὸ ἄκρον τῆς οὐρᾶς (a wolf who has lost the tip of his tail)	ἄνθρωπον σιανθέντα ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων ἐχθρῶν (a man assailed by his enemies, and delivered after small harm)
2.74	λύκον καὶ λίθον (a wolf and a stone)	ἄνθρωπον φοβούμενον τὰ ἐπισυμβαίνοντα αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ ἀφανοῦς (a man afraid of what may happen to him from invisible causes)
2.75	λέοντας καὶ δᾶδας (lions and torches)	ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ θυμῷ σωφρονισθέντα ὑπὸ πυρός (a man whose anger is chastened by fire and that because of his anger)
2.76	λέοντα πίθηκον τρώγοντα (a lion devouring a monkey)	ἄνθρωπον πυρέττοντα καὶ ὑφ’ ἑαυτοῦ θεραπευθέντα (a man in fever cured by himself)
2.77	ταῦρον περιδεδεμένον ἀγριοσυκέα (a bull girt with wild figs)	ἄνθρωπον ὕστερον σωφρονισθέντα ἀπὸ τῆς πρώην ἐξωλείας (a man-made temperate by recent misfortunes)
2.78	ταῦρον ζωγραφοῦσι, περιδεδεμένον τὸ δεξιὸν γόνυ (a bull with his right knee bound)	ἄνθρωπον σωφροσύνην ἔχοντα εὐμετάβλητον (a temperate man who is easily swayed and not stable)
2.79	αὐτὰ τὰ ζῷα τρώγοντα κόνυζαν (animals grazing on flea-bane)	ἄνθρωπον προβάτων καὶ αἰγῶν φθορικόν (a man who kill sheep and goats)
2.80	κροκόδειλον ἔχοντα τὸ στόμα ἀνεωγμένον (a crocodile with its mouth open)	ἄνθρωπον τρώγοντα (a man eating)
2.81	κροκόδειλον ἔχοντα ἰβεως πτερὸν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς (a crocodile with an ibis feather on his head)	<ἄρπαγα> ἄνθρωπον <καὶ> ἀνενέργητον (the rapacious and idle man)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.82	λέαιναν (a lioness)	γυναῖκα γεννήσασαν ἅπαζ (a woman who has conceived once)
2.83	ἄρκτον ἐγκυμονοῦσαν (a pregnant she-bear)	ἄνθρωπον γεννηθέντα κατὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄμορφον (a man born deformed, but later taking on a normal shape)
2.84	ἐλέφαντα ἔχοντα τὴν προβοσκίδα (an elephant with his trunk)	ἄνθρωπον ἰσχυρόν, καὶ τῶν συμφερόντων ὀσφραντικόν (a strong man sensitive to what is expedient)
2.85	ἐλέφαντα καὶ κριόν (an elephant and a ram)	ἄνθρωπον βασιλέα φεύγοντα μωρίαν καὶ ἀφροσύνην (a king fleeing from folly and intemperance)
2.86	ἐλέφαντα μετὰ χοίρου (an elephant with a pig)	βασιλέα φεύγοντα φλύαρον ἄνθρωπον (a king fleeing from a fool)
2.87	ἔλαφον καὶ ἔχιδναν (a deer and a viper)	ἄνθρωπον ὀξὺν μὲν κατὰ τὴν κίνησιν, ἀσκέπτως δὲ καὶ ἀνοήτως κινούμενον (a man swift in motion but moved heedlessly and thoughtlessly)
2.88	ἐλέφαντα κατορύττοντα τοὺς ἰδίους ὀδόντας (an elephant burying his tusks)	ἄνθρωπον προνοούμενον τῆς ἰδίας ταφῆς (a man who has prepared his own tomb)
2.89	κορώνην ἀποθανοῦσαν (a dead crow)	ἄνθρωπον ζήσαντα τέλειον βίον (a man who has come to the end of his days)
2.90	πάρδαλιν (a leopard)	ἄνθρωπον ἐμφωλεύοντα ἑαυτῷ κακίαν, καὶ ἀποκρύπτοντα ἑαυτὸν ὥστε μὴ γνωσθῆναι τοῖς ἰδίοις (a man who has dwelt in evil and concealed his own evil, so that it is not known to his intimates)
2.91	ἔλαφον μετὰ αὐλητοῦ ἀνθρώπου (a deer and a flute-player)	ἄνθρωπον ἐξαπατώμενον διὰ κολακείας (a man deceived by flattery)
2.92	ἔποπα (a hoopoe)	πρόγνωσιν εὐκαρπίας οἴνου (foreknowledge of an abundant vintage)
2.93	ἔποπα καὶ ἀδιάντον τὴν βοτάνην (a hoopoe and some maiden-hair)	ἄνθρωπον ὑπὸ σταφυλῆς βλαβέντα, καὶ ἑαυτὸν θεραπεύοντα (a man injured by the grape and curing himself)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.94	γέρανον γρηγοροῦσαν (a crane on watch)	ἄνθρωπον ἑαυτὸν φυλάττοντα ἀπὸ ἐπιβουλῆς ἐχθρῶν (a man guarding himself against the plots of his enemies)
2.95	δύο πέρδικας (two partridges)	παιδεραστίαν (pederasty)
2.96	ἀετὸν ἀποκεκαμμένον ἔχοντα τὸ ῥάμφος (an eagle with twisted beak)	γέροντα ὑπὸ λιμοῦ ἀποθανόντα (an old man dying of hunger)
2.97	κορώνης νεοσσούς (some young crows)	ἄνθρωπον ἀεὶ ἐν κινήσει καὶ θυμῷ διάγοντα, καὶ μήτε ἐν τῷ τρέφεσθαι ἡσυχάζοντα (a man passing his time in constant motion and irascibility and not even resting to eat)
2.98	γέρανον ἰπτάμενον (a crane in flight)	ἄνθρωπον εἰδότα τὰ μετέωρα (a man who knows the higher things)
2.99	ἰέρακα ἐγκύμονα (a hawk big with young)	ἄνθρωπον ἀποταξάμενον τὰ ἴδια τέκνα δι' ἀπορίαν (a man getting rid of his own children because of poverty)
2.100	κάμηλον (a camel)	ἄνθρωπον ὀκνοῦντα τὴν διὰ ποδῶν κίνησιν ποιεῖσθαι (a man who hesitates to move his feet)
2.101	βάτραχον (a frog)	ἄνθρωπον ἀναιδῆ καὶ κατὰ τὴν ὄρασιν ὀξύν (a shameless man of keen sight)
2.102	βάτραχον ἔχοντα τοὺς ὀπισθίους πόδας (a frog with hind legs)	ἄνθρωπον πολὺν χρόνον μὴ δυνηθέντα κινεῖσθαι, ὕστερον δὲ κινηθέντα τοῖς ποσὶ (a man incapable of movement for some time but later recovers the use of his feet)
2.103	ἔγχελυν (an eel)	ἄνθρωπον πάντων ἐχθρὸν καὶ ἀπεσχοινισμένον (a man hostile to everyone and living in isolation)
2.104	νάρκην τὸν ἰχθύν (an electric ray)	ἄνθρωπον σώζοντα πολλοὺς ἐν θαλάσῃ (a man saving many others from drowning)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.105	πολύποδα (an octopus)	ἄνθρωπον τὰ χρήσιμα <καὶ τὰ ἄχρηστα> κακῶς ἀνηλωκότα (a man who has squandered necessities and superfluities badly)
2.106	κάραβον καὶ πολύποδα (a spiny lobster and an octopus)	ἄνθρωπον τῶν ὁμοφύλων κρατήσαντα (a man ruling his fellow citizens)
2.107	πίννας ἐγκόους (oysters big with young)	ἄνδρα συζευχθέντα γυναικὶ ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡλικίας, ἐν ᾗ ἐτέχθησαν (a man yoked from an early age to the woman who bore him)
2.108	πίνναν καὶ καρκίνον μικρόν (an oyster and a crab)	πατέρα ἢ ἄνθρωπον μὴ προνοούμενον ἑαυτοῦ, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῶν οἰκείων προνοούμενον (a father or a man careless of his welfare, but who is provided for by his household)
2.109	σκάρον (a scarus [fish])	ἄνθρωπον λάμιαν ἔχοντα (a glutton)
2.110	ἐνάλιον γαλέον (a shark)	ἄνθρωπον τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τροφήν ἐμοῦντα (a man vomiting his food and eating again his fill)
2.111	σμύραιναν ἰχθύν (a lamprey)	ἄνθρωπον ἀνθρώπων ἄλλοφύλων χρώμενον μίξει (a man who mates with foreigners)
2.112	τρυγὸνα περιπεπλεγμένην ἀγκίστρῳ (a roach caught in a hook)	ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ φόνῳ κολασθέντα (a man punished for murder who has repented)
2.113	πολύποδα (an octopus)	ἄνθρωπον ἀφειδῶς κατεσθίοντα τὰ ἀλλότρια (a man who has fed lavishly on another's food, and later devours his own)
2.114	σηπίαν (a squid)	ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ καλῷ ὀρμήσαντα (a man who has a yearning for the right but has fallen in with evil)
2.115	στρουθίον πυργίτην (a sparrow on fire)	ἄνθρωπον γόνιμον (a fecund man)

SECTION	GLYPHS	MEANINGS
2.116	λύραν (a lyre)	ἄνθρωπον συνοχέα καὶ ένωτικόν (a man who binds together and unites his fellows)
2.117	σύριγγα (the pipes of Pan)	ἄνθρωπον πάλαι μὲν ἀποστάντα τῶν ἰδίων νοημάτων, ὕστερον δὲ τῆς ἐαυτοῦ γεγονότα φρονήσεως (a man who once lost his mind but later recovered his senses and led an orderly life)
2.118	στρουθοκαμήλου πτερόν (an ostrich-wing)	ἄνθρωπον ἴσως πᾶσι τὸ δίκαιον ἀπονέμοντα (a man who distributes justice equally to all)
2.119	χεῖρα ἀνθρώπου (a man’s hand)	ἄνθρωπον φιλοκτίστην (the man fond of building)

Note

1 Cory’s (1839) English throughout with minor modifications.

Appendix 2

The Egyptian content of the *Hieroglyphica*

The following forty-six glyphs (something less than a quarter) are more or less correctly identified as Egyptian signs:

- 1.1 ὄφιν ἔχοντα τὴν οὐρὰν ὑπὸ τὸ λοιπὸν σῶμα κρυπτομένην (a serpent with its tail concealed by the rest of its body)
- 1.1 ἥλιον καὶ σελήνην (the sun and the moon)
- 1.2 ὄφιν τὴν ἐαυτοῦ ἐσθίοντα οὐρὰν, ἐστιγμένον φολίσι ποικίλαις (a serpent devouring its own tail, marked with variegated scales)
- 1.3 Ἴσιν, τουτέστι γυναῖκα (Isis, that is a woman)
- 1.4 βάλιν (a branch)
- 1.4 σελήνην ἐπεστραμμένην εἰς τὸ κάτω (moon with its horns turned downward)
- 1.5 τέταρτον ἀρούρας (fourth part of *aroura*)
- 1.6 ἰέρακα (hawk)
- 1.7 ὁ ἰέραξ (hawk)
- 1.8 δύο ἰέρακας (two hawks [the male, the female])
- 1.10 κάνθαρον (scarab)
- 1.11 γῦπα (vulture)
- 1.13 ἀστέρα (star)
- 1.14 κυνοκέφαλον (baboon)
- 1.15 κυνοκέφαλον σχήματι τοιῶδε· ἐστῶτα καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐρανὸν ἐπαίροντα, βασίλειόν τε ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχοντα (baboon, but in this way: standing, with its hands raised to heaven and crown on its head)
- 1.16 κυνοκέφαλον καθήμενον ζῶον (baboon, but seated)
- 1.18 λέοντος τὰ ἔμπροσθεν (forequarters of lion)
- 1.19 λέοντος κεφαλὴν (head of lion)
- 1.21 λέοντα (lion)
- 1.21 τρεῖς ὑδρίας μεγάλας (three great water-jars)
- 1.24 δύο κεφαλὰς ἀνθρώπων ζωγραφοῦσι, τὴν μὲν τοῦ ἄρσενος ἔσω βλέπουσαν, τὴν δὲ θηλυκὴν ἔξω (two human heads, one male, looking in, other female, looking out)
- 1.26 λαγῶν (hare)
- 1.27 γλῶσσαν καὶ ὕφαιμον ὀφθαλμόν (tongue and bloodshot eye)

- 1.30 παπύρου δέσμην (bundle of papyri)
 1.36 ἰβιν (ibis)
 1.38 μέλαν καὶ κόσκινον καὶ σχοινίον (ink, and a sieve and a reed)
 1.39 κύνα (dog)
 1.41 φύλακα οἰκίας (house-guard)
 1.43 πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ (fire and water)
 1.44 ἰχθὺν (fish)
 1.46 ταῦρον ὑγιῆ φύσιν ἔχοντα (bull with his member erect)
 1.47 ταύρου ὠτίον (ear of bull)
 1.53 χηναλώπεκα (vulpanser [Chenopolex])
 1.55 κουκουφάν (stork)
 1.60 τὸν ὄφιν ἐγρηγορότα (serpent in state of watchfulness)
 1.62 μέλισσαν (bee)
 1.64 τὸν ὀλόκληρον ὄφιν (complete serpent)
 1.66 σελήνης σχῆμα (figure of moon)
 1.70 κροκοδείλου οὐρὰν (tail of crocodile)
 2.1 ἀστέρα (star)
 2.5 χεῖρες ἡ μὲν ὄπλον κρατοῦσα, ἡ δὲ τόξον (man's hands, one of them holding shield and other bow)
 2.13 ἀνθρώπου δάκτυλος (man's finger)
 2.15 <εἰς> τὴν ἀνατολὴν ἰέραξ ἐπὶ μετεώρου θεῶν ἀνέμους (hawk rising towards gods)
 2.26 παγὶς (snare)
 2.30 γραμμὴ ὀρθὴ μία ἅμα γραμμῇ ἐπικεκαμμένη (line superimposed on another)
 2.118 στρουθοκαμήλου πτερὸν (ostrich-wing)

Specifically, *phonological* information on Egyptian in the text is more limited.¹

Note

1 See Appendix 3.

Appendix 3

The Coptic content of the *Hieroglyphica*¹

- 1 ἀμβρής (1.38): <ἀμβρίζειν> · θεραπεύειν ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς²; n.b. Ἰαμβρής³
- 2 βαῖ (1.7): βαἰ Ο nn, πειβ βαἰ, lord of *spirit(s)*, DM 28 1, gloss. βαί = ψυχή, acc. to Horapollo I v2. Cf? above, βαἰ owl as soul, also in gnostic name βαἰ πχωωχ, *spirit* of darkness (Erman *Aegypt. Relig.*² 250) & in βαινεφώθ Glos 405 (ν εφωτ), cf AZ 62 35.⁴
- 3 βαιήθ (1.7): see notes to items 2. & 5.
- 4 βάϊς (1.3, 1.4): βα (βαε, βαει, βαἰ, βει, βειἰ, βοἰ) nn m, once f = βάϊον, branch of date-palm.⁵
- 5 ἡθ (1.7): ρητ (ρετ); ρτηϑ (ρτεϑ, ρθηϑ, ητϑ, ερτηϑ); pl ρετε (ρε†); -ητ in compounds; nn m, *heart, mind*: καρδία; νοῦς; διάνοια; ψυχή.⁶
- 6 κουκούφας (1.55): κακοῦπατ (κοῦκοῦφατ, κοῦκ[οῦ]πετ), κουκούφα, nn m f, *hoopoe*.⁷
- 7 μεισί (1.59): μείς, μηνός, ό, nom. sg.
- 8 Νοῦν (1.21): noun nn m, *abyss* of hell, *depth* of earth, sea, f νοῦνι; Ναῦνι; ἄβυσσος; βάθος; βυθός.⁸
- 9 οὔαιέ (1.29): οὔε (-γ, οὔειε, -ιε, -ει, -η(η)ι, οὔη(η)γ, -ηοῦ) vb intr *be distant, far-reaching*: μακρύνειν; μακρὰν ποιεῖν.⁹
- 10 οὔραῖον (1.1): ρρο (ερρο, ερο, οὔρο, ρρα, ερρα, ιρρα, ερα, ρρω, ερω, οὔρω), pl ρρωοῦ (ερρωοῦ, ερωοῦ, ρροοῦ, ρρα(ε)ι, οὔρωοῦ) nn m f *king, queen*: βασιλεύς; ἄρχων; τυραννίς; καῖσαρ; ἡγούμενος.¹⁰
- 11 παραύ (1.61): cf. Φαραώ.
- 12 σβῶ (1.38): σβω (σβοῦ), pl σβοοῦε (-ωοῦε, σβαῦε, σβοῦειε, σβωοῦι, σβαοῦι, σβαῖ) nn f *doctrine, teaching*: διδασκαλία; διδασχά; παιδεία; ἐπιστήμη.¹¹
- 13 Σῶθις (1.3): Numenius, *Fragmenta*, fr. 31, l. 41; Porphyry, *De antro nympharum*, sec. 24, l. 3; Hephaestion, *Apotelesmatica*, p. 66, l. 7; p. 142, l. 19; p. 179, l. 23.

Notes

- 1 Entries transcribed from Crum, W. E., *A Coptic Dictionary* / compiled with the help of many scholars (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939).
- 2 Hesychius, *Lexicon* (A-O) Alphabetic letter alpha, entry 3520, l. 1.

- 3 Novum Testamentum, Epistula Pauli ad Timotheum ii 3.8.2.
- 4 Crum (1939): p. 28a.
- 5 Crum (1939): p. 27b.
- 6 Crum (1939): p. 714a.
- 7 Crum (1939): p. 102a.
- 8 Crum (1939): p. 226b.
- 9 Crum (1939): p. 470b.
- 10 Crum (1939): p. 299a.
- 11 Crum (1939): p. 319b.

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